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THE EARLY RELATIONS of ENGLAND WITH BORNEO To 1805.



INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Philosophic Faculty of the University of Berne

For the Doctor's Degree

by

JOHANNES WILLI of GAIS

(Appenzell a. Rh.).

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Von der philosophischen Fakultät auf Antrag des Herrn Prof. Dr. Woker angenommen.

Bern, den 10. Februar 1922.

Der Dekan:
Prof. Dr. K. Jaberg.

TO MY DEAR WIFE

The present work was written at the suggestion of both Prof. Dr. Ph. Woker, at the University of Berne, and Prof. Arthur P. Newton, Rhodes Professor of Imperial History in the University of London, under whose guidance it was achieved. My heartiest thanks are due to Prof. Newton and Mr. William Foster C. I. E. whose valuable assistance will never be forgotten.

Berne, February 1922.

J. Will.

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Chapter I.

Survey of the earliest English Intercourse with Borneo.

Down to 1760.

§ 1.

The Soekadana Period.

1608—1623.

In tracing back the somewhat incoherent history of the relations of the English with Borneo, it was no little surprise for me to discover that this distant country was stated as early as 1599 to be »a large and rich island« worth obtaining as a trading centre.

The petition of the Merchant Adventurers to Queen Elizabeth states that Borneo is one of the places »abounding with great wealth and riches, where the Portugals and Spaniards have not any castle, fort, blockhouse or commandment«. ¹⁾ We know that the wise Queen, fully recognising the national importance of this enterprise, referred the document to Fulke Greville for examination. After a careful scrutiny he presented a lengthy memorial ²⁾ with a list of the names of the absolute kings in the East who »either have war or traffic with Spain«. It seems that the three authorities he consulted, Osorius, Eden's Decades, and John Hinghen's Voyages, were not the best he could have used. For among the above mentioned countries he does not include Borneo, though it had been under Spanish influence since 1580 when the Spanish sent a fleet of 50 galleys to Bourné or Borneo Proper to restore the dethroned king who in return acknowledged their sovereignty. ³⁾

¹⁾ Bruce Annals, Vol. I, 114 f. Bruce John Annals of the East India Company from their Establishment by the Charter ... 3 vols. London 1810.

²⁾ 10 March, 1599.

³⁾ St. John, the Indian Archip., Vol. I. St. John. Horace. The Indian Archipelago, its History & Present State. 2 vols. London 1853.

One of the consequences of the Second Voyage, which started in 1603 under the command of Captain Middleton, was that one of the factors of this expedition, John Saris, drew the attention of the English to Borneo. This factor, who stayed in Bantam, heard of the continuous progress which the Dutch had made in the Malay Archipelago and especially in Borneo, though their first attempts, made at Borneo Proper by van Noort in 1600, had failed owing to the treacherous character of the inhabitants. John Saris must have got information of the new Dutch expedition in 1604 under van Warwyk, who came to Soekadana in search of diamonds and endeavoured to extend the Dutch trade along the shores of Borneo.¹⁾ But what most alarmed the Factor at Bantam were the orders issued at Batavia in 1608 decreeing the establishment of a factory in Borneo, the appointment of a director to conclude agreements with the princes of Sambas, Pontianak, Bandjermasin and Borneo Proper and, to establish factories there, provided that the exclusive privilege of commerce were granted to him.²⁾

John Saris emphasises the importance of the trade of the Flemings to Soekadana »which place yields them great store of diamonds«, with Bandjermasin in gold and blue glass beads »which the Chinese make and sell.«³⁾ It seems to me that he lays a certain stress on these »Chinese«, which very probably did not escape the Directors at home, for we shall see that later on all attempts to establish settlements in Borneo arose in connection with the trade to China. Borneo was never supposed to be an establishment existing *per se* as its situation rendered it a practical intermediate station on the route to China.

It appears that this letter of Saris' had no immediate consequences, for quite four years had to elapse before it was decided to establish a factory at Soekadana, where a Dutch one had existed since 1608. In 1612, when dispatching a pinnace to Japan to take back the remainders of the Fourth and Fifth Voyage left there, Sir Henry Middleton⁴⁾ at Bantam intended to send a jeweller and Sophony Cozucke for diamonds to Soekadana to establish a factory.⁵⁾ They

¹⁾ Valentyne, quoted by St. John.

²⁾ Logan, *Notices of European Intercourse*, Journ. Ind. Arch., III, 506. Logan, J. R., *Notices of European and Chinese Intercourse with Borneo prior to the Establishment of Singapore*.

³⁾ Letter Books, Vol. I, N. 9.

⁴⁾ Letter Books, Vol. I, N. 90, Bantam, Nov. 1612.

⁵⁾ Henry Middleton had the direction of the Second Voyage in 1604 with orders to proceed to the factories which had already been established and to open a trade

were successful, and monopolised the trade in diamonds there to such a degree that the people of Landak sent an embassy desiring that the English should come and settle a factory there.¹⁾

Immediately Captain Robert Larkins and the merchants of the Darling sent instructions to Cozucke in compliance with their request to confer with the Landak chief about the securities upon which they might settle, and to enquire into their relations with Soekadana. Should these be hostile, no factory should be established.

A vigorous trade, carried on by junks between Soekadana and Bantam, promised good results and inspired the Agent Cozucke to proceed as far as Sambas to open a commercial intercourse with the people there.²⁾

But events did not justify this hopeful beginning. Jealousy, quarrelsomeness, inexperience in dealing with the natives, and failure to counteract the intrigues of the Dutch at Soekadana ruined in a few years all that had been begun so promisingly.

First the expedition to Landak completely failed.³⁾ Though Sophony was convinced that a profitable trade was to be had there for diamonds and gold by erecting fortifications on a small island in the river,⁴⁾ the endeavours to obtain it were but small. Captain Robert Larkin indeed made two attempts⁵⁾ to get up that river. A verbose description⁶⁾ of one of those two expeditions states that the failure must be attributed to the treacheries and savageness of the Dyaks. Fifteen hundred of them attacked three of the English, but, not being used to powder and lead, they fled into the woods. When the other junk arrived from Sambas on the 6th May, once more nine Englishmen drove up the river in a prow. They were kindly received by the native governor of Landak. But what they had not attained by force these people now sought by treachery. Their intention to have split the prow against the rocks was baffled by the caution of the English who, warned by two of their black having been slain when they went ashore, left the

with the Spice Islands. He returned to England in 1606 without having received the right of a new factory. Afterwards he took the command of the Sixth Voyage in 1609 as Sir Henry Middleton.

¹⁾ Letter Books, Vol. II, N. 139, April 11th, 1614.

²⁾ Letter Books, Vol. II, N. 142, April 24th, 1614.

³⁾ Cal. of State Papers, I, N. 76, June 14th, 1614.

⁴⁾ Ditto N. 742, July 5th, 1614.

⁵⁾ Letter Books, Vol. II, N. 154.

⁶⁾ Ditto N. 162, April 3rd, 1614.

place, hoping that with a force of twenty men it would be possible to establish a factory and to purchase diamonds. This place alone was reported to produce annually three to four thousand carats of diamonds besides gold, bezoar stones and bees-wax.

The enterprise at Sambas proved more successful at first. Thither Cassarian David had been sent in June 1614¹⁾ and the »Darling« arrived just in time to supply the new factory with stores and provisions and money.

But even by 1615 those at Soekadana were without any news from this place.²⁾ When at last David sent an account of his proceedings³⁾ in December 1615 it was anything but favourable. He reported that not finding the trade answerable to the large charges the Company had sustained and having been thrice in danger of death by the treacherous dealing of the native people he had got leave from⁴⁾ the King of Sambas to return to Soekadana. »So having in the night time shipped all my goods and slaves in a prow, I departed with an excuse to fetch more goods, thinking better to have my life and what remained than stay upon no hopes at all and endanger all.«

Meanwhile things at Soekadana went from bad to worse. When Captain Larkin arrived there in the »Darling« he found the factors in debt to the Dutch »without a penny in the house« so that he had even to break the small stock of his ship to supply them with the necessities.⁵⁾ He also found Sophony, Greete, the jeweller, and another factor on such bad terms that each of them pretended not to be able to live any longer together with the others.⁶⁾ Larkin succeeded, however, for a short time to sell his stores, consisting chiefly of broadcloth, and to purchase diamonds and wax.

Then the first difficulties arose with the Dutch who, made jealous by this slight progress of the English here and in the Moluccas, began to injure their trade by under-selling their goods even at a loss. The sale of cloth became less and less and, whenever circumstances allowed, they purchased all that the natives brought to market before an English

¹⁾ Letter Books Vol. II, N. 142 (3), June 10th, 1614.

²⁾ Ditto Vol. II, N. 226, 2 January 1614/15.

³⁾ Ditto Vol. III, N. 327, 23 December 1615.

⁴⁾ In his letter to Jourdain, dated April 27th, 1615. David's report is somewhat different in that the king took his goods away by force and twice purposed to kill him. (Factory Rec. Miscell. XXV, fol. 136.)

⁵⁾ Letter Books. Vol. II, N. 142 (3), 10 June 1614.

⁶⁾ Cal. of State Papers, I, N. 736, 14 June 1614.

vessel ever arrived.¹⁾ The Dutch beat off the ship »Concord« from the Moluccas, which in lieu sailed to Soekadana and supplied this factory as well as that of Bandjermasin,²⁾ where a new one had been founded by David after he had given up that of Sambas, and which promised to be successful, as he found the people »kind and tractable and very much inclined for selling him bezoarstones and diamonds and for buying cloths«. ³⁾ He was so enthusiastic that he called it »a land flowing with milk and honey«. ⁴⁾ This enthusiasm must have inspired the President at Bantam to send ships more regularly with supplies for both factories on Borneo and to settle matters at Soekadana. This factory heretofore had been weakly managed,⁵⁾ so a new chief, Nathaniel Court, was appointed to take charge, and the disputant factors were removed.⁶⁾ But a curse seemed to lie on this factory. The contentions between Greete and Cockayne continued. The sale of cloth for gold diminished constantly.⁷⁾ Added to this, large debts of Crawford and Sophony were in the hands of the native governor, who never meant to pay. They were reduced to beg the Flemish, arrived in a pinnace, to lend them a hundred dollars »but these flatly denied them«. ⁸⁾ Indeed with the arrival of this Dutch vessel new difficulties and new troubles arose. The Dutch sold their cloth at far lower prices than the English, so that all sorts of people went to trade at their factory, and even the native governor was bribed by them to persuade the Landak men to sell all their stones only to them. Thrice a year such a pinnace was regularly sent out, while the English had always to wait a whole year at least for one of their own. The attitude of the pinnace's captain and crew towards Cockayne became more and more hostile and terminated in threats that within twelve months or less the English and all people there should see wonders.⁹⁾ The Chinese intermediate trade at Soekadana made things still worse, for the English were not allowed to trade directly with the natives, and it was the »Chinese caterpillars« who fixed the prices with the Landaks as they

¹⁾ Letter Books II, N. 226, 2 January 1615.

²⁾ Ditto III, N. 289, 10 August 1615 and N. 294, 30 September 1615.

³⁾ Ditto III, N. 327, 23 December 1615.

⁴⁾ Fact. Rec. Misc. XXV, fol. 136.

⁵⁾ Letter Books, III, N. 330; ditto IV, N. 342, 348, 17 March 1616.

⁶⁾ Ditto IV, N. 406, 29 October 1616.

⁷⁾ Ditto V, N. 447, 24 February 1617.

⁸⁾ Ibid.

⁹⁾ Letter Books, V, N. 458, 8 March 1617.

pleased and hindered them from coming to trade at the English houses. Cockayne therefore made an urgent appeal to the governor and the native queen who happened to be there, to permit them »to go as freely and buy and sell as well in all prowes and with all people as other people«. This was granted to him provided that he would pay the Queen a certain custom yearly.¹⁾

Cockayne, a very prudent and cautious factor, saw clearly enough that this would be the only means »to cast off these heavy and unprofitable hangers on« and he pressed the President at Bantam to support this plan by sending money, for at Soekadana the finances were at zero:

»Dollars not one.

Cash²⁾ as little and dear, at 15 pecowes³⁾ the dollar.

The cloth cannot be sold at the rate demanded, it is too bad.

For ready gold in wedges and unmingled rests

22 tailes, and cannot get so much good gold

to mingle with it to put it away.«⁴⁾

In the same letter Cockayne wished to be replaced by Cothorpe. David intended to return to Bantam and proposed that Greete should be removed.

The oppression of the English by the Dutch at Bantam in 1618, the only place which supplied the factories in Borneo, decided the fate of Soekadana and Bandjermasin though Cockayne strove to revive the trade, which till then was »carried on in such a manner and fashion that all the country cries out and fie at it«. ⁵⁾ He tried also to bring some order into the accounts which had been so neglected by Geo. Collins that one third of the debts could never so recovered, while the diamonds he had bought were worthless. The quarrels between the Dutch and the English, who mutually accused each other of interfering with their trade at Bantam and in the Moluccas, turned soon into open acts of hostility.⁶⁾ The capture of English ships by the Dutch at Bantam, Jaccatra⁷⁾, and Banda⁸⁾, their repeated attacks on Polaroon and Lantore, reduced Bantam to a most precarious condition,

¹⁾ Letter Books, V, N. 506, 5 June 1617.

²⁾ Cash: small Chinese coins.

³⁾ Pecowes: a string of thousand cash.

⁴⁾ Letter Books, V, N. 506.

⁵⁾ O. C. VI, N. 662, 16 June 1618.

⁶⁾ Bruce Annals, Vol. I, p. 202.

⁷⁾ O. C., VI, N. 662, 16 June 1618.

⁸⁾ O. C., VI, N. 668, 17. July 1618.

so that dependencies of it which had not means and energy enough to be independent and to defend themselves were inevitably lost. Could any good effect be expected from the compromise treaty of 1619 which, as early as 1621, demanded a conference to negotiate on the explanations required of it? The war between the servants of the two Companies in the East Indies continued. This state of affairs was responsible for the fate of the ablest man of Soekadana, Geo. Cockayne, who on his return to Bantam was murdered with eleven followers at Cheribon.¹⁾ On the other hand, I am fully convinced from the records I have consulted that the Dutch had no share in the attack of the Sultan of Mataram on Soekadana in April 1622,²⁾ by which the town was ransacked and when the English and Dutch Companies lost respectively 3,000 and 20,000 reals. The documents show clearly that this expedition was directed merely against the natives, who fled into the woods, while their queen was made prisoner. The Dutch withdrew their people a few months afterwards,³⁾ whilst the English in vain persevered till towards the end of this fatal year⁴⁾ in order to recover their debts.

§ 2.

The earliest Attempts at Bandjermasin up to 1708.

The Soekadana attempt had completely failed owing to the many reasons which have been noted in the preceding paragraph, but the innate English tenacity could be daunted neither by bad luck nor by violent Dutch rivalry. The pepper-trade with Bandjermasin, though sometimes interrupted, was almost periodically resumed. From the meagre sources available we learn that, when in 1638 promoters intended to form a new Corporation with privileges for thirty-one years for trading to Surat, Bantam, Bandjermasin, etc., they alleged that at these places the old Company had possessed factories within the last ten years.⁵⁾ In 1639 the Dutch forbade the English to trade for pepper with Bandjermasin⁶⁾, founding their pretensions on the void argument that it was contrary to their exclusive contract with the King, and threatening to seize any English and Portuguese ships they might find

¹⁾ O. C., VII, N. 901, 15 October 1620.

²⁾ O. C., IX, N. 1059, 10 July 1622.

³⁾ O. C. IX, N. 1076, 27 August 1622.

⁴⁾ O. C. IX, N. 1093 x 2, 31 January 1624.

⁵⁾ Court Minutes, 1635—39, June 1638.

⁶⁾ English Factories, Bantam, 2 August 1639.

there. But that was merely a threat, and English merchants at that time could the less be prevented from pursuing their enterprises, as Charles I. in that particular year was going to renew the Charter and to withdraw the privileges once given to Corten and other interlopers, which had caused almost more losses to the London East India Company than the Dutch had done. And so we are not surprised to find the factory at Bandjersmasin still existing in 1641¹⁾, selling calico for gold and pepper.²⁾ Its motherprecidency was so badly off as to have to borrow money from two Portuguese merchants in order to buy pepper at all. In spite of this distress the factory continued at Bandjersmasin, and in 1645 the ships for Bantam were ordered to purchase slaves on the coast of Africa for that factory and others.³⁾ In 1648, when orders were issued to reduce the number of the factories, Bandjersmasin was ordered to be retained, though the debts there were »doubtful and desperate.«⁴⁾

In all the following years the »house« at Bandjersmasin ist stated to be worth the cost except in 1650, when a Court of Committee for the Fourth Joint Stock was of opinion that it would be advisable to give up the factory and to send only one ship a year to trade there »as best it can«. The reason given for this decision was that the factors there had contracted heavy debts and had not secured more than a small quantity of pepper. This plan, however, was not executed.⁵⁾

During the war with the Dutch from 1652—1654 communications from Bantam — this place being much embarrassed by the Dutch fleet and its exchanges with the Coromandel Coast entirely interrupted — were rarely received and the newly created Presidency of Madras or Fort St. George did not interfere with affairs of Bantam. So it is evident that only late in 1655, almost accidentally, we hear again of Bandjersmasin.

The almost interminable wars of Cromwell brought for a certain time troubles not only to the country but also for the Company, though the Government depended much on it as the only source from which

¹⁾ At a General Court in 1640 Pinson reported that when he left Bantam they expected there 300 tons pepper from Bandjersmasin. (Court Minutes, 23 September 1640.)

²⁾ The English Factories, Bantam, 2 August 1641.

³⁾ Court Minutes, 5 February 1645.

⁴⁾ Court Minutes, 10 March 1648, 1 September 1648, 11 October 1648.

⁵⁾ Court Minutes, 22 February 1650.

to get money. After the Treaty of Westminster and during the war with France, domestic troubles prevailed throughout Great Britain, which had serious effects on the East Indian trade. One party of the United Joint Stock, the so-called Adventurers, demanded that each member of the Company should have perfect liberty for his stock, shipping and servants in trading to India. They justified their petition by alleging that the East Indian trade, managed by Joint Stock, had not been as profitable as it necessarily would have been to the subscribers and to the country if carried on by separate voyages. The East Indian Company feared for their Charter and privileges, and presented their affairs to the Protector, asking him to renew their Charter and to prohibit private persons from trading to India. They had indeed the best helpmate and advocate on their side in Cromwell's impecuniosity. The whole affair was referred to a Select Committee of the State, which, finding it so extremely important for the benefit of the whole country, referred it back to the Council of State; that is to say, to the arbitration of Cromwell. He acknowledged the Company's rights in return for a loan of £ 500,000, though at the same time he encouraged the Merchant Adventurers in their projects.

In this uncertainty, the East India Company thought it best to be prepared for either case, and ordered the Presidents and Councils of Surat and Fort St. George »to call in their debts and realise their funds, and send them home in investments of goods of the finest kind . . . that their business might be wound up, and those funds be divided among the proprietors of the Stock«. ¹⁾ The account of the United Joint Stock, dated 1st September 1655, states under the heading:

Credit

	£	s.	d.
Five houses at Bantam, Japara, Macassar,			
Jamby and Bandjermasin	3600	—	—

As later on no information whatever concerning Bandjermasin can be found, it seems very likely that the factory there was withdrawn in the same year, or at least in the following one, when orders from the Court of Directors reached the Presidencies to reduce the foreign settlements and the number of their servants. ²⁾

¹⁾ Bruce Annals, I, p. 504.

²⁾ In 1656 the value of the store-house at Bandjermasin is again mentioned with the somewhat surprising addition »if there be any at this place«. (Court Minutes, 14 October 1656.)

A period of discouragement and despondency followed. The Merchant Adventurers, private interlopers, injured the trade of the Company. Surat and Fort St. George suffered severely. Bantam itself, for more than two years, was blockaded by the Dutch who profiting by the Company's disaster conquered Ceylon. It was reduced to such despair that it even withdrew the Agent from Cambodja and had neither inland nor coast trade.

The revival of trade after the union between the Company and the Merchant Adventurers in 1657/58 came too late to save the factories. Bandjermasin did not figure among the factories and dependencies which were to be delivered from the Unitid Joint Stock to the New Stock.

* * *

At this point we have reached the most important period in the history of the English East India Company, the foundation of the New East India Company by private merchants or interlopers besides the London Company. Owing to privileges granted by the King the interlopers determined no longer to bear with the rules of the Court of Committees or Directors. Those Whigs, as we may call them, profited by the opportunity to offer to the Government the sum of £ 2,000,000 at 8 per cent interest, provided that they should enjoy the privileges of the exclusive trade to India. They outbid the London Company's offer of £ 700,000 at 4 per cent, and so the General Society trading to the East Indies was recognised by an Act of Parliament in 1698. The old Company was to be permitted to trade to India till 29th September 1701.

Now the shareholders of the old Company, foreseeing the losses they were inevitably going to suffer when giving up their trade in 1701, as they were ordered, subscribed as a Corporation to this new stock, and thus became the nucleus of the New Company. This Company, on the other hand, was excluded from the old Company's principal factories in the Indies, which had been founded on privileges granted by the Mogul. It was evident that neither could thrive without the other's assistance and that one had to give way. Which it should be was decided by the Act of Parliament, by subscriptions which the London Company made to the new stock, and by the Charter of 5 September 1698 given by William III. By this he granted to the exclusive »English Company trading to the East Indies« fundamental privileges:

1. To have perpetual succession and a common seal.
2. To trade, for ever hereafter, to India.
3. To have the power to erect Courts of Judicature in India, etc.¹⁾

But in spite of this charter the Old Company continued to exist for some years more. The interlopers could never be expelled from the Indies, so that up to 1707/8, the year of the definitive union and settlement of the contending Companies, the trade to India was carried on by three kinds of traders, or four if we consider as a separate set of India-merchants the shareholders of the Old London Company, who had subscribed to the New or East India Company. Each endeavoured to exclude the others from their stations and to intercept their trade. Let us add that piracy then was felt more and more, so that in January 1699 Commodore Warren had to sail to the East with the King's fleet in order to protect English ships and to co-operate with French and Dutch squadrons against the pirates in the Eastern Seas. Considering all these impediments and that the Company itself did not embark on military enterprises, can we be surprised that a new attempt on Borneo, which was made just at the very beginning of this transition, proved to be a new failure?

The new expedition to Borneo necessitated from the importance of the Dutch occupation of Java and the London Company's preponderance in the pepper-trade at Sumatra. The English Company therefore intended to raise the Coromandel Coast to an emporium for the markets in the China Seas and to bring thither such goods from Borneo — above all pepper — as would suit the trade on that coast. The ship *Julia* was sent and Captain Cotesworth and Henry Watson, as chief, were trusted with the object of opening a factory and trade at Bandjermasin under the protection of the Sultan, to whom a letter was addressed petitioning for the grants.²⁾ From the report in the Journal of the *Julia* it appears that the English were quite unknown at Bandjermasin, for when they arrived there, 21 April 1700, they had much difficulty in making the natives understand who they were, and not until a month later did the king deign to receive them, after Landen had arrived³⁾ and they had sent him many presents. Landen had been appointed »President pro tempore« of any station which he might find practicable as a basis for a trade in pepper, gold and diamonds, with instructions to open

¹⁾ Bruce Annals, III, p. 258.

²⁾ Letter to Bay and Coast 4 April 1699. Ibid. instructions to Henry Watson and Council 11 April 1699.

³⁾ Journal »Julia«, 21 & 24 April; 12, 26 May 1700.

a factory with the possibility of building ships there for China. The negotiations with the Sultan at Tatas contented both parties. The English were permitted to build a warehouse and to load their ships with pepper, provided that they paid for every ship a certain duty. The exclusive right in trade, however, was not granted to them, and the four Chinese junks they met there were loaded at the same time.¹⁾ Though the *Julia* returned to London not till 1702 the Court of Directors continued to dispatch ships to Borneo, from one to four yearly, and were not discouraged by the »most unfavourable accounts« they received from thence as early as 1702.²⁾ The same disorders that we met with about a century ago occurred among the Company's servants at Tatas. President Landen in 1701 was compelled himself to dismiss the Council, the members of which were accused and tried by him for debts and interceptions.³⁾ The Council on their side accused him of »breach of trust and arbitrary conduct«, owing to which — in my opinion false accusations — the Court of Directors dismissed him and ordered him to be seized as soon as he came back to Bengal,⁴⁾ where he was put to trial. In defending himself he attributed the failure at Bandjermasin to the disobedience and misconduct of the servants, to the great mortality among the Europeans and to the impossibility of forming a regular factory.⁵⁾ The second argument is fully proved by all the Journals of the ships staying there, which show that on an average two-thirds of the crew were ill, and that every month one or two died on board. The building of a factory had been prevented by a war with the natives, which broke out without any provocation on either part merely owing to the rapacious and treacherous character of the Bandjereens or to the floating store-house having been removed from Tatas to Bandjermasin, and partly to the innate hatred the natives showed towards the great number of Macassars the English had in their service. This war lasted nearly four months. In the course of the feud Bandjermasin and Tatas were burnt down, the first by its inhabitants, »to terrify« the enemy. When they retired into the interior a small English force followed them up the river, burning down some of their villages. Negara shared the fate of Bandjermasin. Only when the King's last

¹⁾ Journal »Julia« 28 June 1701.

²⁾ Bruce Annals, III, p. 516.

³⁾ Journal »Borneo«, 12 March 1701.

⁴⁾ Letters to Hugly, 6 and 7 August 1702.

⁵⁾ Letters from Landen to the Court of Directors, Borneo 20 April 1720, Batavia 30 June 1702, 10 February 1703.

fortifications at Kajoetangi¹⁾ were taken by force, he condescended to conclude a treaty with the following provisions:²⁾ The King engaged to pay the debts of his brother and another Pangaran, and considerable damages to the English for the loss of their warehouse, and he agreed that the custom-house should remain at Bandjermasin and that this place should be entirely the Company's, provided that they continued to pay customs as formerly.³⁾ So new store-houses were built, but when again four junks and many other prowes arrived to load pepper at Bandjermasin, President Landen determined to leave the place with all the servants and stores.⁴⁾ Meanwhile Thomas Tooley, a member of the former Council, whom President Landen had accused and tried for having overcharged the Company £ 1000.5.8,⁵⁾ had been appointed Chief, assisted by a Council of Four, by the Court of Directors, with express orders to seize Landen's books and papers in order to get evidence of his conduct and to continue the trade there.

With the union of the London and English Companies in 1702, the competition of these two declined. The station of Pulo Condor was withdrawn, its importance for the Chinese trade as a rival base having passed. Instead of it, the Bandjermasin trade was to be directly connected with that to China. After the unfortunate experiences of the Company at this place during the last few years, and deeming their failure due to not having any military defences there, the Court of Directors ordered all military stores and materials for fortifications to be brought from Pulo to Bandjermasin.⁶⁾ This was to be effected under greatest caution and discretion, for though the Javanese and Chinese settlers heartily desired such protection, the natives, always suspicious, would have taken up arms against such measures, and the Dutch, whose influence began to increase, would have prevented it. Through the cleverness and cunning of the agents in Bandjermasin in treating with the king, they indeed obtained permission to erect fortifications for their own protection.⁷⁾ They had already made considerable progress in strengthening the fortifications⁸⁾ and great hopes arose from

¹⁾ Journal »Borneo« 17 June to 8 October 1701.

²⁾ Ditto 14 October 1701.

³⁾ Ditto December 1701.

⁴⁾ 4 April 1702.

⁵⁾ Journal »Borneo«, 12 March 1701.

⁶⁾ Lettres to President Catchpole at Pulo Condor, 18 January 1705.

⁷⁾ Lettres from Borneo, 16 May, 30 September 1704, 1 and 13 February 1706.

⁸⁾ The plan had been drawn by Captain Barry, who unfortunately soon afterwards died. In fact he had been poisoned by the natives »so cunningly that the rest

the report of the year 1704/5 giving the best prospects for a future trade. Catchpole at Pulo Condor received final orders to remove, as President, with all settlers and stores to the new Presidency of Bandjermasin, where a new grant had been obtained from the king for a free trade, without objection to the fortifications.¹⁾

In reality the situation was not so enviable, for in the very same lettres we find that the English there were in constant apprehension of the natives, who openly manifested their aversion and hostile intentions. A supply of soldiers had been considered necessary to protect the forty Europeans, eighteen of whom only were fit as soldiers, and to guard the four hundred people who were working at the fortifications. But instead of the reinforcements urgently wanted either from Europe or from Pulo Condor, whose garrison had been expected for many months, one single, wretched, half-starved factor was cast on shore on the 18 January 1706, and soon was identified as Baldwin of Pulo Condor. From him they learnt that President Catchpole and most of the English had been murdered on the 2nd March 1705, and their warehouses burnt down, before the orders to remove to Bandjermasin had reached them.²⁾

It was supposed that the Malays had been instigated to this inhuman crime by the Cochin Chinese, but in my opinion we cannot go as far as that, and I should be rather inclined to consider it one of the hundreds of common depredations committed by Malay pirates in the course of two centuries.

The loss of this point of support was felt at Borneo by the arrival of many more Chinese junks, which raised the price of pepper to such a degree that the English were no longer able to fill up more than two of their ships yearly, though in former years they had filled five or even six vessels. The work at the fortifications was carried on in a fever of excitement,³⁾ so that they should be finished in 1708 or 1709. But, strange to say, it seems as if this settlement was destined to share the fate of Pulo Condor, although in somewhat different circumstances, and Cunningham, who had escaped the massacre at Pulo Condor, then prisoner in Cochin China, and finally Chief at Bandjer-

of the English had no suspicion of them, as the Sultan confessed to Captain Beeckman about ten years later. (Beeckman Voyages to Borneo.) Beeckman, Captain D., A Voyage to and from the Island of Borneo in the East Indies. London 1718.

¹⁾ Lettres from Bandjermasin 28 May, 2 June and 8 October 1705.

²⁾ Lettres from Borneo 31 January 1706.

³⁾ Letters from Bandjermasin 23 and 25 November 1706, 27 and 31 January 1707.

masin, had to undergo again the nerve-racking experience of an unexpected sudden assault. Hamilton is inclined to blame him for the success of the enemy's attack because »he was too much a scientific man und left the conduct of the Company's affairs to others«. ¹⁾ Another reason, in his opinion, was that the English were beginning to domineer over the natives too early and that they drew the king's resentment on them by searching one of his boats.

The description of the short fight on the night of the 27th June 1707 between the Sultan's people and the English differs somewhat according to the only two authentic authorities; namely, Hamilton, the trustworthy author, and the letters of Cunningham of the late Council. ²⁾ These report that the natives first were beaten off, but that the loss of the Europeans was so great that they escaped with difficulty to their ships and got the Company's treasure on board. The loss on shore was estimated by them at fifty thousand dollars.

Cunningham ascribed the sudden attack to the instigation of the Chinese who, jealous of the proportion of the trade in pepper which the English had acquired, foresaw that their fortifications would enable them to exclude the Chinese entirely from any trade. This accusation is evidently inconsistent with the report of the agents in 1704, who pretended that the Chinese settlers heartily desired such a protection. Moreover, this attack bears so much resemblance to that of 1701, which had entirely failed, that I should rather consider it a repetition of it, arising from thirst for revenge, mistrust, and new petty offences.

With this would also agree the explanations given by the Sultan of Kajoetangi in 1714 to the super-cargoes of the Eagle galley, the Sultan still becoming enraged whenever he remembered the first English factors at Bandjermasin. . . . he began to lay heavy complaints on our countrymen, telling us how at their first arrival they came like us and contracted with him in the same manner, obliging themselves to build no forts, nor make soldiers; but that under pretext of building a warehouse, they mounted guns and insulted him and his subjects in a most base manner; that he bore it patiently for a great while, until several of his subjects were beaten, wounded, and some killed by them, as they passed by in their boats on their lawful occasions; that they forced from them such duties and customs as belonged only to him, and acted very contrary to reason or honesty in all their pro-

¹⁾ Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, Vol. II.

²⁾ Letters of Cunningham to the Court of Directors, 26 July 1707; letter from the Council at Bandjermasin to ditto, 24 July 1707.

ceedings. . . . Then he told us with very great concern how they fired several of their great shot at the Queen-mother, which frightened her so that ever since she continued almost distracted, and that they would have taken her prisoner, for what reason he could not imagine. . . . He likewise told us of one Captain Cockburne, and some others who were taken prisoners, and there put to death, and the manner of their sufferings¹⁾

Hamilton reports that the English did not resist on shore, but retired to their vessels as soon as they heard of the Sultan's plan. When three thousand Byadjus, — the same who in 1701 had tried to take the factory — arrived in the night, the factory and the fortifications were burned down at once, while others attacked the ships. The small vessels were also burnt. Many of the natives were killed in the »spread nets«, so that — according to Chinese reports — fifteen hundred of the Sultan's soldiers were slain. The Dutch also lost some of their own people, a significant proof that they were not concerned in the treachery. It is certain that the English were completely surprised, having been entirely ignorant of the Sultan's plan. That becomes quite evident from the heavy losses the enemy sustained; a number, though, very probably exaggerated according to oriental fashion, which never would have been attained when only fighting on board the few ships. Had they known the plan, they would not have waited idly until they were attacked, but would have followed the example of Landen and Captain Henry Barry of the »Borneo«, who only six years ago, at the very same spot, with only twenty Europeans and forty Lascars, had driven the well-armed population of the whole kingdom from one village to another; on which occasion they had seized all their fortifications where, to the very last, the natives had gathered thousands of soldiers behind stockades und palisades well-lined with guns.

Im am far from thinking that the impostors of Balambangan seventy years later could ever allege in their own favour that their cowardly wickedness had a precedent at Bandjermasin. These men here had no motive for having their books and papers destroyed by fire!

In 1713 the East India Company sent two ships, the »Eagle« galley and the »Borneo«, with factors to re-establish a trade at Bandjermasin, which succeeded so far that they were received by the

¹⁾ Beeckman: Voyage to Borneo, pp. 74, 75.

Sultan and allowed to purchase pepper as soon as they had persuaded him that they were private traders and did not belong to the English Company. This Company was still so hated there that the natives would on no account admit any member of it, nor allow them to build store-houses or factories.¹⁾

It appears that these super-cargoes behaved so well towards the Sultan and his subjects, whom they treated with every respect, that the Sultan lost his resentment, apparently repented his deed, and invited the English Company to trade once more with his country.²⁾ Indeed, a few more attempts were made to get pepper at Tatas, but these proved so unsuccessful that in 1725 all people and stores were withdrawn.³⁾

§ 3.

The second Bandjermasin Period.

1738—1749.

It is the historian's privilege to bid farewell to the present and to revive scenes of the past, long forgotten by most of his kind owing to the small importance they had in the universe, or to the scarcity of traces they left, when time clad their pettiness in almost impenetrable shrouds. How often we hear of navigators and daring adventurers who crossed the seas in earlier times in search of the earth's richest treasures! We are fully informed of their voyages in their journals, which contain many more details about their dealings on shore than is generally expected, besides the many »Voyages« which appeared in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. It is just those ships' journals which more and more enabled me to get an idea of life and trade at Bandjermasin in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Bandjermasin, on the south coast of Borneo, was situated on the large river of the same name, about twelve miles distant from its mouth. Like every place on the coast of Borneo, the town was protected by the nature of the broad river-entrance against any unexpected assault by ships from the sea-side, for, stretching from one shore to the other, a broad bar, known to every navigator under the name of »Tomborneo« or »Tomberneo«, prevented any large vessel from pene-

¹⁾ Beeckman: Voyage to Borneo.

²⁾ Valentyne, quoted by Hamilton.

³⁾ Journal, »Thistleworth« and Journal, »Princess Amelia«.

trating into the river at low tide. About one third of the English Journals state that their ships stuck in the mud for at least some days, if not for weeks. But as soon as this bar was crossed the ship proceeded in calm, fresh water, driven upwards by the swelling flood, and soon was met by natives in small prows, who were fishing for cat-fish or prawns and rock-oysters. No ship ever directly went up to the town, but dispatched one of these suspicious Bandjereens to the Sultan or one of his pangarans, with a few presents, to intimate to him their arrival. Allured by the presents, such a person of high rank duly appeared the next morning, and after being presented with more trifles, took over the charge of announcing to the Sultan the ship's intention. But as the Sultan generally, and strange to say always when a European ship arrived, was either at Tatas or some other town hundreds of miles inland, some weeks or even months elapsed before his Royal Highness was pleased either to see the captain and supercargoes at his then residence or to come to Tatas, rarely to Bandjermasin, after having attentively inquired into the presents the traders could afford him. During this interval one pangaran after the other made his appearance on board the ship and, according to the value of the present with which he was honoured, offered either part of or his whole pepper-crop, not however without inviting the English captain to his dwelling and presenting him also with some trifles, such as a few bananas or some fowl of extremely small value. For these the other party expressed more thanks than he would have done at home for presents a thousand times more valuable.

All references give the same report of the arrogance of the Bandjereens, the native coast-tribe, of whom Beeckman gives an appropriate description¹⁾: They »are of a middle stature, rather under than over, well shaped and clean limbed, being generally better featured than the Guinea negroes. Their hair is long and black, their complexion somewhat darker than Mulattos . . . , they are affronted if you call them negroes . . . They are very weak of body, which is occasioned chiefly by their lazy inactive life and mean diet, not having the opportunity of walking, or of any land exercise, and working seldom, but are always in a sitting posture, either in their boats or houses . . . If they have but a quantity of rice and salt, they think themselves very rich, for if they throw a casting net at their door, they need not fear the want of a dinner, so great abundance of fish is in that river«.

¹⁾ Beeckman: *Voyages to Borneo*, p. 40—42.

Whenever they met with an ignorant and simple-minded fellow, they thought it quite legitimate to cheat him, and never could understand why the English did not over-reach by false weight persons who brought them pepper without having the least knowledge of scales and price.

Though they were at all times true believers in Mahomed, they had retained some of their pagan customs, and tolerated Christianity. There was a tradition that a Portuguese padre had made many converts by »his courteous behaviour and endearing ways«. When, not content with his success on the coast, he went to the Byajus, they killed him at once. After his death another came, pretending to have been called by the dead padre's spirit to come and continue the work he had begun at the same place. In spite of their attempts to dissuade him from this design, he also went to the Byajus, made many converts, and built a church there, adorning it with their gold; but they soon were tired of him, murdered him, plundered and destroyed the church.

It is interesting to notice that all contemporaries of that period impute the different attacks and the loss of the English factory, not to the Bandjereens on the coast, but to the inland aborigines, the Byajus, and that they all agree in attributing to these poor outcasts all the vices which some scores of years later were the characteristics of the Mohammedan coast-tribes all around Borneo. But at that time, the latter had not yet entirely succeeded in subduing the »rebellious, warlike and barbarous« naked pagans, and very often implored the English traders' assistance against them, which generally was rightly refused.

We owe the almost unique description of these people, which indeed distinguishes clearly between Byajus and Bandjereens to one of these numerous rebellions, which brought the captains of the »Eagle« galley and the »Borneo« into very near contact with the Byajus. They are described as living merely upon rapine and the spoil of their neighbours, being covered only with a very small piece of cloth round their loins, but tattooing their bodies and deforming their ears by thrusting large plugs into their soft parts when still young »and by continual pulling down these plugs the holes grow in time so large, that when they come to man's estate their ears hang down to their very shoulders«. ¹⁾ They were reported to live in clans without any form of government.

¹⁾ Beeckman: Voyage to Borneo.

To believe this description one would imagine these beings to be relics of the antediluvian era. But we must not forget that the English were at that early time never suffered to trade or to have any acquaintance with these wretched natives and that they were told these frightful stories by the Bandjereens to deter them from any intercourse with the aborigines.

In the foregoing chapter I stated how in 1702 Bandjermasin was burnt down by its inhabitants to terrify the enemy, and from later reports it is evident that it had not been rebuilt. Scattered posts and piles, and the ruins of the once fortified English factory, were all that remained, while Tatas, about six miles further up the river, had assumed its importance. It appears that later on Tatas and Bandjermasin became names for one and the same place, and that the Bandjermasin of to-day was originally the Tatas of 1710. Giving therefore a picture of Tatas is the same as of Bandjermasin.

When the long pourparlers with the messengers of the Sultan of Kajoetangi and Negara finally approached an understanding, the factor, sent out to begin trade, dispatched a pinnace or two, which sailed and rowed up the main river more than twenty miles, and thence turned into a smaller narrow branch of it, which at full tide still allowed large China junks to come up to Tatas and even further. Suddenly the overhanging woods opened their foliage, the mighty stems receded on both sides, and before the astonished gaze a low range of some three hundred houses, all of the same form and height, rose directly above the water. Between these wooden dwellings, built on floats in the river or only on stilts in the mud, small boats lay or were rowed lazily to and fro from one opening or trap to the other, and a shrill female voice offered bananas, fowl, fish, etc. for a handful of rice or salt or a piece of cloth. On the shore, where the floating houses were strongly bound and fastened with rattan cables to some high-grown trees, a shrieking and shouting band of men, women and children, some of the latter even in the arms of their mothers, were bathing, enjoying one of their daily sports. But as soon as the strange vessel appeared, or announced its approach by the sound of trumpets — which terrified people and monkeys alike — they instantly rushed into the woods or climbed up the next house, and thence balanced themselves on logs that lay from house to house, to their respective homes. Others went into the low mosque, discernible by its plain minaret and the once white piece of linen hanging at the door to dry the promptly washed feet. Naturally the houses consisted only of one cajan-thatched storey,

divided into different apartments, with very thin split bamboo walls, and often one could see some of them, built on trees laid and fastened together, floating adrift down the river and even into the sea, because the rapid and strong ebb had broken the cables.

In spite of the disgusting air that arose from all the pickings and garbage beneath the houses, the supercargoes, though almost persuaded »of passing the river Styx«, proceeded to one of the pangarans, who meanwhile had been indentified as the principal trader. After a short ceremony the pangaran introduced them to one of the Sultan's relatives, who for this purpose had come down to Tatas, and now, sitting cross-legged, and after having silently examined each of the Europeans for some minutes, began to haggle for some hours, trying to persuade them of the immense advantages they were going to enjoy by his Sultan's clemency in allowing them to trade in pepper, though their predecessors had rewarded him only with injuries. But the English, knowing that the natives were as fond of their money as they were of the natives' pepper, answered tit for tat, and these preliminaries ended regularly with a copious meal consisting sometimes of more than thirty dishes of rice, boiled fowl, eggs, venison, buffalo flesh, fish, etc., which the enviable Englishmen enjoyed with wine and punch, while the poor natives publicly drank »their best liquor«, water of the river. These preliminary discussions with the prince went on during the following days, each party always showing much indifference and a tendency to give them up as hopeless. Finally they agreed on a house in town for the super-cargoes for a small rent and great presents, on the customs which the English had to pay for any picul¹⁾ of pepper, and on delivering the natives some barrels of powder. A contract was made in the name of the kings of Kajoetangi and Negara on one side and the English merchants on the other side. But this treaty very often soon afterwards was declared null and void, and had to be altered by the Sultan's orders because it was not signed with his »Great Seal«, without which he did not regard himself bound. With insignificant variations, all these contracts have the same wording, of which the following is a standard example:

»A contract made between the Kings of Kajoetangi and Negara, and the Prince Purba of Negara, with the sons of Englishmen, come hither this year to fill both their ships and go away; not to make

¹⁾ 1 picul = 132 lbs (according to Beeckman). 133¹/₃ lbs present weight = 100 catties.

any soldiers, or build houses or forts. The price of the pepper to be four dollars and half per picul and a great deal of it, amounting to 4 or 5000 piculs, and to stay here three months for it; and farther to pay one suco custom per picul to the king. The pepper to be weighed at the town of Tatas, and to pay for it when weighed.«¹⁾

Generally in the following weeks visits were paid to the Sultan at Kajoetangi, which village is built similarly to Tatas. In great pomp, bearing the presents at the head of the small retinue, the English approached the Council House, after having saluted the residence with a certain number of gunshots, to which the few five or nine-pounders, mounted on a stockade near the Sultan's palace, replied as well as possible. For, though opening their rusty muzzles downwards on the river, at most four or five of the fifty guns in the possession of this mighty sovereign were still able and secure enough to shoot with, and though all these fifty instruments were mounted on three stockades along the river, they were so impracticably placed that certainly not one shot would ever have reached the surface of the water.

The Sultan, however, immensely proud of his importance in the world, would never allow any European to stand in his presence. His subjects greeted him with their hands in a praying posture, and bowed down their faces to the ground as they sat cross-legged, and executed all his orders creeping instead of walking, and the foreigners were always expected to do the same. Nothing but their highly welcome presents would remove the frowns from the king's angry face whenever they offended against these rules.

We must not imagine that with one present a contract with this sovereign was made secure. An agreement was only binding as long as the presents pleased His Majesty. The more pleased he was with them, the more pepper was brought to the store-house at Tatas, but as soon as the presents grew scarce pepper became very rare. Either it was sold to a Chinese chief trader, who constantly resided there to purchase it for the Chinese junks which came in great numbers every year; or the treacherous trait at once prevailed both in king and subjects, and what they could not obtain by presents they attempted to seize by a sudden attack on the store-house. As the prosperity of trading with Bandjermasin depended entirely on the faculty of bribing the Sultan and the pangarans, it was always of the utmost importance

¹⁾ Beeckman, p. 67.

that a super-cargo there should know from the very beginning how to dispose of his stock of presents so that it was not at an end before he had filled his ship with pepper.

The importance the pangarans played in commercial negotiations is a proof of the aristocratic constitution of the Government. Though the Sultan felt flattered at being looked upon as an absolute tyrant, and was sometimes pleased to show his power by having one of his poor subjects killed in his presence, he was quite powerless with regard to the pangarans, whose wealth consisted chiefly in large domains and who behaved towards their servants and subjects as tyrannically as the Sultan. Each of them thought himself as great as the king, and the latter never dared punish them for murders or other crimes. Their influence was so great that they could take murderers and thieves under their protection and into their service. Such a criminal who declared himself the slave of a pangaran was secure against the Sultan's prosecution, and was an honest man in the eyes of the world. Evidently this absolute despotism of the pangarans was of great disadvantage to foreign traders, who never could expect justice from the Sultan for any wrong received from his subjects. Hence the many ruptures of treaties on the king's part and hence the almost uninterrupted procession of presents from one pangaran to the other and up to the Sultan.

* * *

The failures experienced at Bandjermasin in the first quarter of the eighteenth century seem to have disgusted the Court of Directors, no new attempts being made until 1737. In this year reports from Madras und from private traders encouragad them to order Captain Pelly of the »Prince of Wales« to call on his passage to China at Bencoolen and such other ports and places as should be judged proper for procuring a cargo of pepper for China.¹⁾ Immediately afterwards the Committee of Correspondence recommended Liell, having been at Borneo, and Hodgson, an apt person come back from China, to proceed to Bandjermasin as super-cargoes, together with Pelly and a proper linguist.²⁾ It being of the utmost importance to fix once and for all the allowances of these servants, the Committee thought it best that five per cent — later on six per cent — upon the sale of the pepper

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 16 Sept., 1737.

²⁾ Correspondence Reports, 22 Sept., 1737.

in China should be invested in gold to be divided among these three persons.

By these orders it is quite clear that Bandjermasin, in that period more than ever, was regarded merely as an intermediate station in the trade to China, of which even the kind of proceedings was copied. A permanent factory was intended to be built or hired there for the super-cargoes, who should stay there as long as their ship, and, when relieved, had to transfer the house with its small furniture to their successors of the next ship.

In order to get the Sultan's favour and permission for that purpose, the Committee of Shipping¹⁾ were requested to provide a quantity of lead, one or two pieces of scarlet cloth, some small arms and powder, some looking-glasses, and whatever else they judged proper for sale and presents at Bandjermasin.²⁾

The moment for this new adventure was indeed well chosen. The Dutch had not been there for three years, and the Sultan was eager to renew trade, being in great want of necessities and commodities, which he hoped to receive in form of presents.³⁾ Vessels from Madras and Bencoolen brought thither produce from the Coromandel Coast to barter for pepper, and trade began to flourish to a degree which it had never before attained. A »floating small bamboo house in the river, tied to some stakes, driven in the mud on the bank«⁴⁾ represented both Market-House and Exchange. It was no great palace, indeed, though political affairs tended to render it not only a commercial but also a military centre of the Bornean Commonwealth. Its furniture was not exquisite, and rather satisfied commercial pretensions than those of comfort. In 1746, when trade was at its height, and at least two ships, sometimes five and six, yearly from London, besides the many vessels from the Presidencies, were filled with pepper at the factory.

Sultan Tamjeed Allah, enchanted with the presents and the respectful treatment with which the English honoured him, wished nothing more than their protection against piratical neighbours and the Dutch who, he apprehended, might again appear with a fleet to renew, or better, continue the exclusive spice trade granted to them in 1714

¹⁾ Undoubtedly the Minutes of the Committee of Shipping would have provided much material, both for this and the Balambangan period, but unfortunately those prior to 1813 were destroyed in 1860.

²⁾ Court Minutes, 10 March 1738.

³⁾ Journal »Prince of Wales«, 21 April 1738.

⁴⁾ Journal »Walpole«, 14 April 1739.

and 1733. Every ship brought back to London letters from His Royal Highness, always of the same tenor, containing two of his heartiest desires: Protection for his harbour and country and a horse for his amusement! The Court of Directors at last yielded to the importunate prince, and in 1741 they concluded a treaty with him for an annual quantity of pepper, engaging themselves to keep a guard-ship at Bandjermasin in order to protect the country from pirates.¹⁾ The horse, which fortunately survived the long passage, was duly delivered in high pomp »with a bale of hay and a cask of oats«. ²⁾

Both parties kept their engagements as far as urgency demanded. The guard-ship was for some years prevented from starting. It was not till the end of 1745 that the »Dragon« was appointed for that purpose to sail for Bandjermasin and to lie there for six months. At the same time it was ordered to procure a cargo of pepper.³⁾ The sultan and his subjects behaved in their usual manner although »a little more civilised by the yearly commerce they have had of late with European nations«, so that the captain of the »Neptune« reported »We loaded our pinnace with all the sick and the stores, all well armed, a precaution absolutely necessary in these parts of the world, where one ought always to be in readiness of defence as the natives are naturally inclined to thievery and roguery«. ⁴⁾

That they did well to be cautious was shown by a sudden attack on the longboat of the »Colchester«, ⁵⁾ and by a »great deal of disturbance«, in the course of which the young Crown Prince Ratta Anum, who was famous for his hatred of the English, threatened »to cut the factory all off«. For a short period it had indeed to be abandoned, and only when the Sultan and Caya Tomungung, their declared friend, had assured them of their protection, the factors dared to reopen it. ⁶⁾

The Sultan himself also gradually lost patience at the non-arrival of the promised guard-ship. It may be that a Dutchman who arrived there as the first of that nation after more than ten years exercised a bad influence on the King, whose excitement reached its climax when he heard that the Prince of Madura had taken refuge on board

¹⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17.

²⁾ Journal »Severn«, 23rd August 1742.

³⁾ Correspondence Reports, 23 October 1745, and Court Minutes ditto.

⁴⁾ Journal »Neptune«.

⁵⁾ Miscellaneous Letters, Sent 2 Aug. 1745.

⁶⁾ Journal »Porto Bello« 2 May to 5 May 1745.

the »Onslow«, Captain Congreve's ship. In spite of having been presented with another horse, two great guns, a cask of shot and two greyhounds, he suddenly seized Captain Congreve and put him into irons, swearing not to release him until the Prince of Madura was delivered on board the Dutch vessel.¹⁾ This request was complied with. Nevertheless Congreve was kept prisoner, and the exasperated Sultan added another injury to free Englishmen in detaining the »Onslow«. He insisted on this new measure by alleging »that it was now four years from his first writing the Company to keep their word in sending a guard-ship and that he would detain us till another arrived«. ²⁾ Finally, when persuaded that Congreve had been appointed Agent for Tatas, with rich presents and proposals for a new contract, he consented to release him, and to grant him some privileges on behalf of the Company. Congreve should have free access to the Sultan and enjoy his protection. A free trade and the liberty of visiting the Bandjereens were granted to him, besides the permission to weigh pepper with English scales.³⁾ Soon afterwards the guard-ship »Dragon« arrived, but the Sultan's mistrust and exasperation were too deep-rooted to be lulled again. Moreover the Dutch who had arrived in two prows from Java had again entangled him in their nets, so that he could no longer act according to his own will. He began to vex the English in every possible way. Finding their weights too heavy, pepper henceforth had to be weighed with his own, and though the whole pepper-crop had been contracted for by the English he ordered in Council that half of it should be preserved for the Chinese, who paid considerably more for the picul. Fate helped the Dutch in their malicious design against the English. Instead of acting in harmony in order to keep the sinister people lurking in the Dutch prows away from the King, the two captains of the »Onslow« and »Dragon« quarrelled about the loading of their ships with pepper, and a discreditable obstinacy prevented Congreve from lending even the smallest sum to his colleague, who had had the misfortune to have been dispatched without current money. So the »Dragon« was compelled to sail without any cargo at all. At the same time, Congreve was ordered by the Sultan to leave Bandjermasin in two months in consequence of a vast number of Chinese prows and junks which had arrived.⁴⁾

¹⁾ Fac. Rec. China 52, 26 June 1746.

²⁾ Ditto.

³⁾ Ditto 28 Aug. 1746.

⁴⁾ Ditto, Nov. 1746 and Feb. 1747.

Then the decline and close of this period approached as fast and suddenly as a thunderstorm. When on 20 March 1747 the dawn rose over the grey waters in the river-mouth two real Flying Dutchmen were there at anchor, quietly ignoring the presence of the English. Only three days later some of their super-cargoes and officers appeared on board the »Onslow«, without any token of friendship or evil design. A week or so later, however, the English discovered the purpose of the arrival of the Dutch from two sources. The first was the King's strict order that pepper should no longer be delivered to their factory; the second consisted in the Dutch Commodore's letter to the Sultan, dated 20 March 1747, which was handed to them by their old friend Caya Tonumgung.¹⁾

Had the English representatives fifteen years later taken the trouble to study this important paper, which afterwards will be given in detail, they would not have profered and insisted on the unfounded proposition that the Dutch arrived there according to an invitation by the Sultan to come and take the trade into their hands.

More and more vessels arrived from Batavia at Bandjermasin, so that a month later the Dutch fleet there consisted of five ships, two sloops and one schooner,²⁾ which controlled the traffic and examined every vessel going up and down the river.

To the English it became evident that a longer stay in the port was of no value, for, though the Dutch carefully avoided any open injury to them, their proceedings with the Sultan showed clearly enough that the English were to be excluded from any trade. It appears that the natives were not greatly charmed with the pretensions of the Dutch, for in a secret letter to Congreve the repentant prince humbly begged him to acquaint the East India Company that »if they have a desire to continue a trade at Bandjermasin they must be obliged to ask liberty of the Dutch Company«.³⁾ When accordingly Captain Congreve asked permission for purchasing eight hundred piculs of pepper, the Dutch Commodore flatly refused, but on the other hand granted the Chinese 4,000 piculs.⁴⁾ Such a hint could not be misunderstood.

So the English left this port, which had become so inhospitable by the interference of a Western sister-country who pretended to be

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. China, 52. 23 March 1747.

²⁾ Ditto 52, 26 March 1747.

³⁾ Ditto, 9 May 1747.

⁴⁾ Dutch Record A, No. 17, 11 November 1762.

then on friendly terms with Great Britain. Proudly, all colours flying, after having presented the Dutch Commodore with a large prow — a kind of Danaorum donum — the »Onslow« saluted the silently hostile fleet and steered for China.

As at home nothing was known of this insidious trick, further ships were dispatched to Bandjermasin during 1747. The »Delaware«, however, seems to be the only one which reached her goal. She was warned on her passage by a Chinese junk, which at the same time encouraged her to proceed by the information that the natives were much displeased with the Dutch, so that they had not bought any pepper for two years, and that the Bandjereens greatly desired the English to come and trade with them again.¹⁾ The Dutch Governor at Batavia, General Imhoff, tried to persuade the Captain of the »Delaware« not to continue his voyage, by making him answerable for all consequences of what might happen at Bandjermasin and by assuring him that he might depend upon not getting one grain of pepper there.²⁾ At the same time he dispatched two ships thither to take care of the »Delaware«. But this English captain appears to have been made of stronger stuff than Congreve. He went to Tatas, reopened the factory there, and »settled with the Sultan in the best manner«,³⁾ but no pepper was brought, and »those dogs, the Bandjereens«, became more and more menacing, so that all stores and people were definitely withdrawn from the factory and the place abandoned for more than fifty years.

Such a breach of all loyal engagements urgently called for redress, and the Court of Directors handed a remonstrance to the Dutch Company in 1749, but the latter excused the proceedings of General Imhoff by general and evasive answers.⁴⁾ Strange to say, the East India Company put the affair ad acta until 1762, when new debates between the Dutch Company's commissioners, van Schoonhoven and van der Hoop, and the representatives of the East India Company were carried on concerning the exclusive contract of the English for salpêtre in the East Indies. The English founded their claims on the fact that the Dutch were in possession of the exclusive contract for pepper at Bandjermasin then existing to the prejudice of the English East India Com-

¹⁾ Journal »Delaware«, 25 March 1749.

²⁾ Ditto, 14 March 1749.

³⁾ Ditto, 25 March 1749.

⁴⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17, 15 December 1762.

pany. Quoting the Company's proceedings at Borneo from 1741 to 47, they stated that their treaty with Sultan Tamjeed Allah had existed without interruption during those six years, and that they had been expelled from that place by force, by General Imhoff's »declaring it a blockaded-up port and that the commodore there had orders to fire upon them«.¹⁾ Further, they especially urged that the Sultan had invited the Dutch by letter to come and expel the English and take the trade into their hands.

This was one of the weakest features of the English position, because they had no document whatever at hand to prove it. On the contrary, the facts themselves falsified their statements. As I have previously suggested, Captain Congreve had succeeded in getting the Dutch Commodore's letter to the Sultan, which contained in extenso the objects of his fleet's voyage to Bandjermasin. The claims of the Dutch notified therein were as follows: —

1. They demanded to have all the pepper without admitting any other nation to share the trade.
2. All Chinese junks were to be excluded from trading another year at Bandjermasin.
3. According to former treaties the Sultan was to transfer to them all the trade in his Dominions.
4. If he did not comply with all this the Commodore had orders to commence hostilities.
5. A factory was to be established immediately.
6. The price of the pepper was to be as agreed in former contracts, Spanish dollars 4,1 per picul. (The English used to pay 6 dollars.)

Such could never be the contents of an introductory letter from a nation which had in a friendly way been invited to come to trade!

In this letter the English East India Company indeed was not mentioned by name, but it is clear enough that they were included in the terms »without admitting any person to have any part« and that they were excluded from trade by the third paragraph »the Sultan has to confer to the Dutch all the trade there«.

Besides, if the English representatives had not been too much engaged by their principal demand to secure the exclusive contract for Saltpetre, they would have observed that the Dutch commissioners were much better versed and armed in debating with them the Band-

¹⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17, 11 November 1762.

germasin affairs than they themselves were. Van Schoonhoven, basing his assertion upon the abovementioned letter, proved that the expedition of 1747 to Bandjermasin had been merely to punish the Sultan for his breach of faith by having entered into such a treaty with the English and by having allowed them to traffic in pepper. He emphasised that General Imhoff did nothing but his duty in sending a fleet against the guilty Sultan, and in blockading his port until they obtained satisfaction. He founded the right of the Dutch in doing so on former contracts concluded with him, without quoting them. But the English vehemently denied that any such existed by which the Sultan had been bound to reject their offers.

In this they were, however, wrong again, for more than one treaty had been concluded by the Dutch with Bandjermasin by which they had excluded every other nation from the pepper-trade.

In the treaty of 4 September 1635 the Sultan promised »to sell no pepper to other nations as long as the Dutch kept a commercial intercourse with him«. ¹⁾ About twenty-five years later, on 2 June 1661, Pangaran Rattoo of Martapoera renewed and simplified it by stipulating that »the native vessels should not be allowed to export pepper to any places but Batavia and Malacca« and that the Dutch should be allowed to build a factory at Martapoera provided that they would pay five per cent on all exports and imports. ²⁾ This contract was renewed three years later. But the definitive treaty on which the Dutch founded their claims and which they had never given up was that of the 26th September 1733, concluded with the rajah and the pangarans and stating in 19 articles the pretensions of the Dutch, that the Chinese junks should be admitted but only one of them allowed to export pepper, lying outside the Bar under the inspection of a Dutch officer, that the Dutch should have the whole pepper produced at Bandjermasin, and that in return they would protect the Sultan against any foreign invasion, as soon as they would have a factory or any ship on the river. ³⁾ This Treaty of 1733 was an open breach of the Marine Treaty of the 1st December 1674 as far as it granted to the Dutch the exclusive pepper-trade at Bandjermasin. But this important fact entirely escaped the attention of the British representatives. They argued only that the behaviour of General Imhoff was an infraction of the first

¹⁾ Dutch Records No. 1.

²⁾ Ibid.

³⁾ Ibid.

article of the above mentioned treaty because in 1747 when Bandjermasin was blockaded by him there was neither war nor hostilities, but friendship and peace between the Sultan and the Dutch. The Marine Treaty of the 1st December 1674 concluded at London between the Britannic Majesty and the States General stipulated:

Article I. The two contracting powers promised each other free navigation and commerce in all those territories »which are or at any time hereafter shall be in peace, amity or neutrality« with the English King or the States General. •

Article II. In war this freedom of navigation and commerce never should be infringed in any kind of merchandise, but should extend to all commodities as in peace, except what had to be comprehended as contraband.

Article III. Defined chiefly arms as contraband.

Article IV. Stated that all kinds of spices and in general all provisions which serve for nourishment should not be reckoned as prohibited goods.

To the statement that the Dutch had no right to exclude them from Bandjermasin at a time when the relations of the Dutch with the Sultan were friendly, the English added that moreover they absolutely denied the existence of an exclusive contract between the States General and the natives. For if by ancient grants the yearly pepper produce had been given to them, they were obliged to purchase and export it annually, and if that contract included a ship to protect the Sultan and his country, the Dutch were also obliged to station it there. In reality, however, the English argued, things were so: The Dutch had renounced this trade for many years; they had neither exported any pepper from nor kept any guard-ship at Bandjermasin for more than three years when the first English ship arrived there. Hence they had annulled all previous treaties, a proof of which was that they did not protest either against the English or the Sultan in 1741.

To this the Dutch Commissioners gave no reply and, to the advantage of the English themselves, they later on never reminded them of this somewhat dangerous argument. Only twenty years afterwards, and about half a century later again, the English East India Company would have been in a critical plight in reassuming possession of Balambangan founded on a treaty entirely neglected by them for more than a score of years, had the Spaniards and the Dutch denied their repeated claims by a similar reasoning.

Finally, to stop debates for which neither party had been prepared, van Schoonhoven and van der Hoop requested the Court of Directors to apply to the Dutch Company itself on this subject; a piece of advice which was never followed by the Directors, whose attention was soon directed to a place almost opposite Bandjermasin on the north-east end of Borneo.

Chapter II.

Enterprises for Improving and Extending the Trade in the Far East.

1757—1765.

The more we approach modern times in historical research the wider becomes the field we have to cover. What, in the beginning of this book, was merely an enterprise of a Company of Merchants, the investigation of whose proceedings could be strictly confined to two or three places, has developed into an undertaking of far-reaching consequences, not only commercial but even political, in the course of 150 years.

The States General and the King of Great Britain found it a puzzling affair, and fully understood its importance in the relations between the two nations, and by silent mutual agreement the one ceded to the other its place, in order to prevent a probably inevitable war.

The East India Company had attained a position which no other originally trading association could boast of. Owing to its riches, the English kings courted the Company and granted it privileges which gradually created a State with large fertile territories in the East Indies, protected by garrisons and fortresses against native and European invasions. A numerous fleet almost exclusively carried on the trade between the Far East and the civilised West, no longer troubled by Spanish or Portuguese interference since 1588 and 1640, and not seriously rivalled by the Dutch after the Navigation Act and the wars of Lewis XIV.

Political events in Europe threw their shadow on the Company's settlements in India. Wars were carried on simultaneously at both ends of the world. Treaties were binding for both the Company's servants and the King's subjects, though they were less loyally observed so far from home, which caused the Court of Directors incessant trouble and the ministers much work and correspondence with the Hague and Madrid concerning complaints of their respective servants in the East.

Not all political clashings with foreign nations, however, were reported to the Government in London, or even to the Court. Most of them were settled by the Presidents themselves by direct correspondence with the Spanish and Dutch Governors. Madras, or Fort St. George, was granted extremely substantial powers concerning diplomatic negotiations, and about the middle of the eighteenth century the Governor and Council there behaved in many cases as independently as, later on, the Governor General of Bengal.

The Company had become a political power and its leading servants in the East were very frequently men who there served their apprenticeship in the art of governing, and became later important statesmen of Great Britain. Their influence more and more extended over the whole East up to China, stretching far beyond the Company's territories, and for the history of any small part of these regions research into distant politics and diplomacy is necessary. When, therefore, in this chapter, the proposed subject apparently is sometimes left and the stage transferred to Sulu and the Philippines, it may be attributed to the unbounded rules of history and not to the inability of the author to concentrate.

§ 1.

Preparations for Improving and Extending the Trade to China.

A colonial map drawn about 1750 would explain to the most indifferent mind that the plight of the English factories at Canton was anything but enviable. Hundreds of miles from the next Company's settlement, then to be reached only by one passage, which at any time could be cut off by the adjacent Dutch establishments and which moreover in certain seasons was almost impracticable, the trade thither experienced plenty of inconveniences and losses. Plans to remove these hindrances occupied more than one session of the Directors in 1757 and after mature deliberation they found that there were two means of relief: one being a new establishment at some convenient place in that quarter of the world; the other the discovery of some other passage by which the voyage might be performed with safety in all seasons.

To human understanding the first solution might appear easier and more natural, but fate decreed that the second should be first put into execution.

On his arrival at Batavia towards the close of the year 1757, Commodore Wilson of the »Pitt«, finding it too late to proceed to

China on the usual course, had the courage to try to accomplish his voyage by sailing directly eastwards with the north-west wind trough the Molucca Islands and by the coast of New Guinea into the Pacific Ocean, thence by the north-east wind round the Philippines and between Luzon and Formosa to Canton.¹⁾ He returned in the same way, and made the whole voyage in much less time than on the usual course, so that later on all ships adopted this route.

The discovery of this new passage not only marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the East India Company, but was a turning point in the general history of navigation. The three men who share the fame of having originated and undertaken this courageous enterprise, and of having thus opened a new passage which brought the extreme East into much closer contact with the West, are worthy of mention. They were Captain W. Wilson, constituted »Commodore of all ships and vessels freighted by or belonging to the Company outward bound in India and China, and homeward bound«²⁾; Governor George Pigot of Fort St. George, and Alexander Dalrymple, then a simple »writer, assaymaster and clerk to the Committee of Accounts, deputy secretary, and accomptant general of the Mayor's Court«³⁾ at the same place.

Founded on the reports of Commodore Wilson about the eastern islands which he had either touched at or heard of, the Secret Committee made preparations to put into execution the other necessary part of their purpose: the establishment of a new settlement. This they entrusted to the Governor and Council at Fort St. George. George Pigot, the prudent, clearsighted, but unlucky, Governor and his Council were unanimous that they should employ on this secret service the Company's covenant servant, Alexander Dalrymple⁴⁾, and that the »Cuddalore« schooner should be put under Pigot's⁵⁾ orders for this purpose.⁶⁾

¹⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17, 14 January 1764.

²⁾ Court Minutes, 30 Nov. 1757.

³⁾ Madras, Civil Servants.

⁴⁾ Concerning Dalrymple's life interesting details may be found in *The European Magazine*, Vol. XLII, November 1802.

⁵⁾ This is not the place to give a biography of this eminent Governor. He is too great to be dealt with by such an inexperienced pen. His merits, and his influence on the growth of Great Britain's Empire are so evident that to treat of them adequately within the limits of this work would be impossible. Here may be pointed out only that the history of the first Balambangan establishment was coincident with the rise and fall of this honest and simple genius.

⁶⁾ Madras Pub. Proceedings, 11 April 1759.

§ 2.

Dalrymple's Instructions on Secret Service and the Results of his First (1759—1761) and Second Voyage up to the Siege of Manila.

Governor Pigot's instructions to Alexander Dalrymple fully prove the absolute confidence he always placed in him. They begin as follows:

»Sir, There are some circumstances of a private nature improper for public view which you are to pay a particular attention to in the course of your voyage.

Although the voyage is purposely intended for the prosecution of commerce to Sulu, you must consider yourself however as under general directions to be particular in your observation of every nature during the course of it.«¹⁾

Further, he was directed to particularly observe the harbour of the Nicobars; to conclude a provisional treaty at Sulu with the Bughis²⁾ and to endeavour to engage them to bring spice plants for plantations at Sulu. Other objects of the voyage were to try an establishment in the Sulu dominions, but to be very careful in the choice of its place and to examine minutely both the north end of Borneo and the port of Banguay. As for this purpose an absolute cession of some spot to the Company was supposed to be of great benefit to prevent pretensions of other powers, Dalrymple was requested to endeavour to obtain it from the Sultan of Sulu. But also in this he was to be extremely cautious in a possible correspondence thereon arising with other European Governments, in order to avoid any disputes with them concerning claims which they might proffer. That he might succeed in this most difficult point, Pigot recommended Dalrymple to lay much stress on the Sulus' declaring that on his arrival they had been free from any engagements with other nations. Finally, he was instructed always to insist on his having no authority for a definite determination and, as all circumstances could not be foreseen, it was left to his discretion

¹⁾ Home Miscell. 771.

²⁾ The Bughis coming from the Moluccas and Celebes were known as the most enlightened people in that quarter, and as they were reported to be the only important traders in spices and other native produce the Directors hoped to bind them by treaties for the benefit of the Company. Gradually, however, they turned to piracy and committed terrible depredations on the south-east and south coast of Borneo.

to act according to the exigencies of events as he would think best for the Company's advantage.¹⁾

Before proceeding with the enumeration of facts, let us set forth the motives on which Dalrymple had to act:

The purpose of the voyage was to establish trade with the immense Sulu Empire, which stretched at that time over the whole Archipelago, included the whole set of islands off the north-east and north coast of Borneo and embraced the wide belt of the whole north-east of the mainland of Borneo itself. In order to secure this trade a place somewhere — but a somewhat circumscribed somewhere! — in those large dominions should be obtained by cession for establishing a settlement. That this »somewhere« was proposed to be either in Sulu or Banguay, or the north end of Borneo, speaks clearly enough for its being intended to secure and improve the trade to China at the same time.

The question why it was just the Sulu Empire with which a new trade was to be opened can easily be answered. At that period Sulu was the only remaining independent nation in that part of the world. The Moluccas had been in the hands of the Dutch and the Philippines governed by the Spaniards for so many years that both nations had tacitly refrained from driving out each other from their possessions, but (what the English foresaw and very soon found to be true) they both also tacitly agreed that no intruder should ever be suffered to set foot on or among their territories. The Dutch had noticed with suspicion the appearance of the »Pitt«, and this suspicion grew with each succeeding English ship on the new track to China, so that even before Dalrymple reached Sulu they had taken drastic measures to expel the East India Company before it had landed one man.

The Governor at Batavia, hearing of the English plan concerning a new establishment in the East, and »well knowing that our title to the various settlements the English formerly possessed in Java, Borneo, Celebes and the Moluccas and neighbouring islands though long neglected had never been renounced«²⁾ set up an extraordinary claim to an exclusive right in all those islands and threatened that the appearance of any English vessel in those seas would be regarded as an offence and injury. Governor-General Jacob Mossell was only prevented from sending two ships to accompany and watch the »Pitt« by Commodore

¹⁾ Appendix I.

²⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17. Letter of the Secret Committee to Lord Halifax 14 January 1764.

Wilson's threat that he would sink them at once.¹⁾ As similar hostile acts, which shall be dealt with in a later chapter, were repeated after 1761, the English East India Company in 1764 petitioned the King to protest on their behalf at the Hague.

The reports on Dalrymple's voyage are rather scanty. A chain of accidents prevented his entering on the examination which was expected. He touched at Cochin China and China and proved the Straits of Sapy to be a good passage to Canton. Above all, the expected results concerning Sulu were obtained²⁾, for he had been kindly received by the Sultan, who concluded with him a treaty of friendship and commerce on 28 January 1761.³⁾

By these articles Sultan Mahomed Mu'izzud Din, son of Sultan Mahomed Shahabud Din, engaged, for himself and his successors, to cede to the English a suitable place for a factory and to secure to them its perpetual possession. He permitted them to purchase ground and to carry on free trade with all his dominions. All other Europeans, including the English, without the consent of the Company's Chief, should be excluded from trade. The Company, on the other hand, promised to assist him if attacked. In other articles it was agreed that the English should be judged by their own law, and that both foreign traders settling there and Sulus employed in the Company's service should be under English jurisdiction. Another paragraph fixed the Sultan's share in the cargo of any vessel lost on the coasts of his dominions, while the last determined »These articles to remain in force for ever if ratified by the Company, but if not approved, three years are allowed to settle others, till when these shall continue in force.«⁴⁾

In the September following, this treaty was ratified by Datu Bandahara, the head of the nobility, on their behalf, and by the chief people of Sulu.⁵⁾ It bound the Sultan to concede substantial privileges, while the English were only bound to assist him if attacked. But just this one point was the most critical and dangerous, for owing to it the Company had to assist the Sulus also against other Europeans, and that may have alarmed the Company's servants at Madras and the

¹⁾ Letters of Commodore Wilson to J. Mossell, Gov. Gen. 24 December 1758, and of J. Mossell to Commodore Wilson, 25 December 1758.

²⁾ Home Misc. 771. Dalrymple's letter to the Secret Committee, 2 May 1761.

³⁾ Ditto 629 and Factory Records, Borneo.

⁴⁾ See Appendix II.

⁵⁾ Dalrymple, Alex., *A Plan for extending the Commerce of this kingdom and of the East India Company*. p. 32. London 1769.

Directors, and was probably the reason why they never approved this agreement.

They were much more interested in another paper which contained a contract concluded between Dalrymple on the Company's behalf and Datu Bandahara, chief merchant of Sulu, on 20 November 1761.¹⁾ It stipulated that the Company should enjoy a profit of 400 per cent in sending a cargo amounting to 44,000 dollars from the Coast, Bengal and other places to Sulu, where it was to be bartered against Sulu goods valued at 88,000 dollars, which again would be sold in China for 176,000 dollars.²⁾ This immense profit was expected by the new trade in the very first year, provided that a considerable part of the goods arrived early at Sulu, lest the Chinese junks carried off what by then could be collected.

This news gave rise to unbounded hopes at Fort St. George. President and Council wrote to the delighted Directors: »This Sulu scheme presents a field of vast extent for the improvement of the trade of the Company«.³⁾ Simultaneously Dalrymple, »a man of capacity, integrity and unwearied application« was recommended to their benevolence.

Again he was appointed to proceed to Sulu as Commander of the Honourable Company's ship »London«, to reap the fruits of his harvest and »to attack and destroy any ships or vessels of the enemy he may fall in with during the course«.⁴⁾ The »China« and »Osterly« were ordered to follow with the goods provided for Sulu.

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At this point we come into direct contact with the great events that troubled all Europe, Asia and America, known best as the Seven Years' War, which must be examined more closely. At the same time, the scene must temporarily be transferred to Sulu and the Philippines, for, in order to understand the important events which follow, it is necessary to glance at the recent past of the mighty Empire of Sulu and at its relations with Spain.

The Sulu Archipelago, formerly called Archipelago Felicia by the Spaniards, consists of an immense number of islands stretched out in a north-east and south-west direction between the Philippines and Borneo. The capital, Yolo or Sulu, on an island thirty miles long and twelve

¹⁾ Home Miscell. 771.

²⁾ Ditto 771. Dalrymple's letter to Fort St. George, 22 March 1762.

³⁾ Abstracts of Letters from Fort St. George, 17 April 1762.

⁴⁾ Madras Public Cons., 31 May 1762.

broad, has given its name to the whole group, which may be regarded as the remnants of an old land-bridge, which can easily be reconstructed on a map with the help of the submerged mountain ranges spread between the Philippines, Borneo and Celebes.

At the time of this narrative the jurisdiction and power of the Sultan of Sulu extended far over these islands, for in 1704 the Sultan of Brunei had made a cession of North Borneo from Kimanis northward, with the islands of Palawan, Banguay, Balambangan etc. to the Sulus.¹⁾

The earliest attempts of Europeans to conquer Sulu were made by the Spanish Governor of Zamboanga in 1638 and 1639. But they proved unsuccessful, as Sulu emissaries invited the Dutch, to begin trade and to expel their common enemy. Anticipating trouble with that nation, the Spaniards left Sulu in 1646, after having enforced an offensive and defensive alliance with the Sultan, by which they recognised his authority over all his dominions except four small islands in Felicia, which they retained. The Sultan was to maintain peace and amity with them, and in return for their evacuating his capital he promised to admit the Jesuits at Sulu and to protect them against any molestation. Though this treaty did not remain for one century — it was of some importance in 1763, when the Spanish Governor at Manila thought it his duty to protest against the English coming into those regions.

Of equal importance at the time was a new contract for trade between Manila and Jolo, including the cession of Basilan to Spain in 1725. The Moro raids continued. They ravaged the coasts of Palawan and the Bisayas Islands, even after a Spanish fleet had burnt down numberless establishments on the shores of Sulu in two subsequent expeditions. As late as 1737 a treaty of permanent peace with Sultan Alimud Din I. put an end to the insane conflicts. Again it was a defensive alliance providing free trade and making either state responsible for infractions of the treaty committed by its subjects. Both parties engaged to exchange their captives, and the Sulus were to return all the Church images and ornaments they had stolen.

For the first time a Sultan of Sulu kept his word given to European Jesuits, and by doing so he ruined himself with his people! King Philip V., encouraged by Alimud's loyal behaviour, in September 1746

¹⁾ Dalrymple, *A Clear Proof* . . . p. 31. — Dalrymple Alex., *A Full and Clear Proof that the Spaniards can have no claim to Balambangan*. London 1774.

requested him by letter to admit the Jesuits. Sultan and datus complied and, what was more, the Sultan himself authorised the building of a church and the erection of a fort for the security of those innocent lambs of the Church! A present consisting of a great sum for building a fleet, nails and steel and a mass of gunpowder to make cracks, cemented the friendship with him. But soon the somewhat strange behaviour of the Jesuits, the liberties they took, the too prominent inclination of Alimud for them and Spanish customs created an opposition party whose leader, Prince Bantila, planned to dethrone the Sultan and to expel the missionaries. He founded his claim to the throne on his being the son of Sultan Shahabud Din, to whom, after the great ancestor's (Badarud Din's) death, the Sultanat should have reverted, instead of going over — probably by usurpation, to Nasarud Din and Alimud Din.

In the following disturbances Bantila was successful in his pretensions. The Jesuits fled, and Alimud, wounded by Bantila's spear, followed them to Zamboanga to enlist the Spaniards' aid against the triumphant usurper, who adopted the proud title of Mu'izzud Din, i. e. Defender of the Faith.

It would occupy too much time and space to give in full an account of the fate of the unhappy exiled king and his family at the hands of the Spaniards: how they received him with triumphal arches and great pomp; how steps were taken for his conversion and for christening him Don Fernando de Alimud Din I. Catholic Sultan of Jolo; and how the Crown Prince Raja Muda Mohamed Israel and his sister were put into the Spanish school at Manila. Only after some years had elapsed were endeavours made to restore him by force, which however turned out ill for him and his family by a queer accident, for, though all the seven men-of-war in whose company he sailed landed safe at Sulu, Alimud's frigate was driven off and landed at Zamboanga, where the Governor, always suspicious of the natives, imprisoned him with all his retinue because a quantity of arms were found on his ship. The authorities und Jesuits at Manila, formerly his beloved and best friends, opened a never-ending trial against him, kept him prisoner for more than a dozen years, and carried on a merciless war of devastation and extermination against his native country, which at last compelled the Sulus and Bantila to consent to his return, mainly owing to the persuasion of the Princess Fatimah, who had been released for this purpose. This again failed at the last moment owing to some small conditions to which Bantila would never yield, although

all the princes and princesses had already been landed in 1755 on their native shores, and they were carried back, fettered and in irons, to continue their miserable life in prison until relieved by the English in 1763.

This story of Jesuit perfidy and cruelty is worthy of mention and remembrance as a companion picture to that of Spanish policy in the West Indies.

In the meantime Bantila governed with energy and relentless hatred against the Spanish and eagerly seized every opportunity to damage them. Therefore it is easily understood that in 1761 Dalrymple was received with open arms and all he wished was granted him readily, provided the English assisted the Sulus against any enemy! On the other hand, the Spaniards were right in their suspicion that out of such an alliance between their declared enemies more danger was to be expected than they had ever experienced from their arch-enemy, the Dutch, and they too took measures to stop the progress of the English.

Bantila, who must have been not only a great and fearless warrior, but also a usurper of more than average ability, and who indeed was led by no other motive than the desire to benefit his country, both when he usurped the throne and during his reign, in the course of the next two years, in common with his people, overcame the aversion which had caused him to dethrone Alimud Din, and which had in fact turned into deep compassion for this hapless prince's plight and a boundless hatred of his tormentors. It needed only one little impulse from without to make them fight for his freedom and restoration, and this impulse was given by two coincident events: the repercussions of the Seven Years' War in the extreme East and Dalrymple's Second Voyage.

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Before dispatching the »London« the prudent President at Fort St. George requested the Governor at Manila to afford Dalrymple all countenance and assistance in the expedition to Sulu whither the English had been »invited by the natives to a commerce with them«, ¹⁾ in a letter so straightforward in tone and form that the most suspicious critic would have fallen into the trap. His wish was indeed complied with by the Spanish for a certain period.

¹⁾ Factory Records, Borneo, 7 June 1762.

At first, the second expedition proved anything but successful. On their arrival at Sulu on 18 August 1762, Dalrymple and Kelsall, second in command, found that in consequence of a severe famine and smallpox the population had considerably decreased. Owing to this and the death of Datu Bandahara, the chief person concerned in the contract, the Sulus pretended to have been prevented from collecting any of the contracted goods. A new contract, therefore, was immediately entered into to prepare a cargo for the ship that was expected from the Coast.

The contract, dated 12 September 1762, engaged Datu Juan Patatawan to take over the new cargo according to the former contract, viz. at one hundred per cent on the invoice price and to deliver: Firstly, in three months teepy shells, wax, sago and cowries¹⁾ to the amount of 20,000 Spanish dollars, secondly, within eleven months birds' nests, teepy, sharks' fins, and sago to the same amount.²⁾

As, however, the ship with the Coast goods did not arrive, the first loss was already sustained in that only part of the payment could be taken on board the »London«. Besides, the Sultan, taking it ill that he had not been included in both contracts, raised dissensions and disturbances in the town. Then, bribed by presents, he acted as mediator and compelled everyone to pay their debts. Yet he could not prevent the murder of two of the ship's crew, for which the English never received redress, though a proclamation was issued by him that »the murderer should be put to death and if it were his own son«. ³⁾

All these were evil omens, and when Dalrymple and Kelsall left Sulu on 5 January 1763 their impression was that it would be inadvisable to enter into any new engagement unless there were a change of government, but that proper persons and goods should be sent thither to obtain the completion of the existing contract in co-operation with the Factors at Canton. As the Bughis were inclined to resort to English ports, but averse to Sulu under the present administration, there was no hope of cultivating spices unless there was a fixed establishment. It was evident that a new settlement could not hope to compete with Batavia until it was provided with a great assortment of goods for the returning Bughis' prows.

¹⁾ Cowrie = a shell of a small gastropod, used as money in the East. Sanskrit *kaparda*.

²⁾ Madras Publ. Cons., 12 April 1763.

³⁾ Ditto, 30 March 1763.

For this purpose Dalrymple had carefully secured two places quite differently situated. On his passage from Madras Road he had touched at Abai, on the northwest coast of Borneo, and after a month's friendly intercourse with Abdul Bandhara of Abai and Oran Juan of Tampassuk these two princes granted him on 26 July 1762 the first places on North Borneo that ever came into British possession »the island of Usukar and the part of Borneo to the northward of Abai river called Bira Birahan with what more land the English may want hereafter for plantation of pepper or other uses.«¹⁾ All other Europeans were to be excluded from these territories. The other stipulations corresponded with those of the treaty of friendship with Sulu (1761), and here again both parties mutually agreed to assist each other »against all enemies and in every other respect«.

As to this new treaty I am inclined to hold the last engagement responsible for its never having been adopted by the Company, so that it, sooner than any other, fell into oblivion.

More attention was paid to the grant of Balambangan obtained from Sultan Bantila on 12 September 1762.²⁾ Unfortunately the original of it must have been mislaid, but that it existed is evident from Dalrymple's »Case relating to the Island of Balambangan«³⁾ and from the beginning of the document of the cession of Palawan on 19th September 1763. The latter begins »I Sultan Mahomed Allamodin (Alimud Din) who govern this kingdom of Sulu having been informed by Mr. Dalrymple that he had somewhat to cummunicate to me in presence of my counsellors in regard to the treaty made with the Sultan Mahomed-Mo-ee Jodin (Mu'izzud Din) about his having requested the Island of Balambangan as a place for trade, and for building and repairing ships, and for making a fort for its defence, and the said Sultan having given the said Island of Balambangan to the Company of England and promised others besides if the other should wish and ask for them . . .«⁴⁾ On his return from Sulu Dalrymple accordingly took possession of this island for the Honourable East India Company and hoisted the British flag there.

This first occupation had no further consequences. As Bantila was always regarded as a usurper, both the Court of Directors and Governor and Council at Fort St. George never relied on this acquisition until it was granted by the legal sovereign of Sulu.

¹⁾ Home Miscell., 629.

²⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo.

³⁾ London 1774.

⁴⁾ Factory Records, Borneo.

The question why Alexander Dalrymple and the English East India Company then, and still forty years later, insisted on making Balambangan the headquarters of their trade in the Eastern Seas may be answered here.

When cruising in those quarters on secret service, Dalrymple learnt by experience that the channel between Palawan and the north end of Borneo is the only opening in the bar by which communication with Polynesia could be effected in all seasons. He stated this to be not only the centre of the monsoon but also equidistant from Korea and Japan, Bengal and Coromandel Coast, and New Holland. Of great importance was the fact that the Chinese junks passed there annually in their passage to the ports of Borneo Proper. A further advantage was that this small island is provided with two excellent harbours, from which a good communication could be expected with Borneo, Sulu and Mindanao. Indeed, nothing better could be found, as it was reported to be well supplied with fresh water, timber, fish, and a luxuriant vegetation. What gave Dalrymple the final reason for preferring this place to any other was the favourite eighteenth century doctrine that an island in the vicinity of a large mainland was best adapted for the purpose of a commercial establishment, it being generally more healthy than the continent and well suited to attract traders from all around, and above all because it was more secure and could be maintained with less expense.

Under the influence of this somewhat bizarre idea were founded the settlements of Pulo Condore, Balambangan and Prince of Wales Island, and it was not given up until the great Raffles proved its absurdity.

When the Directors at London heard of the progress Governor Pigot had made in establishing a trade to Sulu under the management of Alexander Dalrymple, their opinion about it was anything but optimistic. They apprehended continual disturbances and revolutions owing to the weakness of the Supreme Government there, by which their affairs would always be in a precarious situation. They therefore could not entertain any hope of making a settlement »as nothing else but strong fortresses and a respective force would secure it against such malicious designing people«. ¹⁾ Yet, though they thought Dalrymple's expectations and projects »chimerical« concerning the commercial treaty, they recommended that the trade to Sulu should be kept up by small vessels for the purchase of pepper, clove bark, cinnamon and cloves, those »being indeed capital articles«.

¹⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 9 March 1763.

§ 3.

The Definitive Cession of Balambangan as a Consequence of the Seven Years' War.

One of the last acts of hostility of the Seven Years' War before the definite treaties of peace of Paris and Hubertusburg was the conquest of Manila by Admiral Cornish and Sir William Draper, undertaken from Madras in 1762. Soon after the capture, William Draper, by the King's orders, delivered up that place to Dawsonne Drake, who took possession of it for the East India Company.¹⁾

Dalrymple, who was of the expedition, tells in a short account how, while the English attacked the city, the Sultan Alimud Din, who was still a prisoner, with his retinue had to withdraw to Pasig, ten miles up the river, where the Spanish intended to make a last resistance; and how from thence he sent some letters to Manila exposing therein his unhappy fate at the hands of the Jesuits. Further, how he informed the English that he had only outwardly changed his religion, through fear, and that he requested the protection of the English, for which he would highly reward them.

Reasoning that the attachment of the Sultan to their interests might forward the contract made with the Sulus, the English complied with the prince's request, and when attacking Pasig spared his house and took him with his family back to Manila. They immediately granted him a monthly allowance of one hundred dollars,²⁾ but many consultations were held on the subject of Alimud's offer to cede to the Company any place in the Island of Borneo they might wish. They were the more inclined to accept his offer as just at that time an ambassador arrived from Sulu to invite the old king back to the throne in the name of Bantila, the datus and the common people. Nevertheless, the Deputy Governor and Council refused to take any further step until Alexander Dalrymple, who was expected from Sulu, should arrive and approve of it.³⁾ The Crown Prince Israel repeated his father's offer, adding the grant of the exclusive privilege of trading free of all customs to Sulu, provided that the English would send him and his father back to their native country, where he was to succeed him on the throne.⁴⁾

¹⁾ State Papers, Foreign, Spain 165, Draper's letter of 1 August 1764.

²⁾ Madras Publ. Cons., general letter from Manila, 25 December 1762.

³⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, consultations at Manila 29 Jan. and 1 Feb. 1763; Fact. Rec. Borneo, letter from Deputy Gov. & Council at Manila to Mr. Dalrymple, received 11 April 1763.

⁴⁾ Ibid.

Such favourable proposals could not reasonably longer be rejected, and on 23 February 1763 the articles of an alliance offensive and defensive were signed by the said two Sulu princes and Dawsonne Drake, President and Deputy Governor of the Philippine Islands, and the rest of the Council, on behalf of the Honourable United Company of Merchants of England.¹⁾ By this the Government of Sulu — still at Manila — agreed to cede to the English such part of the island of Sulu or its dependent territories as the Company might choose to erect forts or factories upon. They further consented to confirm in every respect the treaty of commerce concluded with Bantila, to grant to the English an exclusive free trade in all the Sulu dominions, and to assist them at Manila or any other place.

The English on their part engaged to acknowledge Alimud Din and his son Isreal as independent sovereigns and not to encroach on their prerogatives, and to assist them, when attacked, with such force as the situation of their affairs would permit. Perpetrators of murders and thefts committed to the Company's detriment were to be prosecuted and tried by the Sultan.

The importance of this new treaty, though it apparently did not create a new situation, lay firstly in the permission to build forts for protection against any enemy and to trade exclusively and without any duties and customs; secondly in the remarkably fine and well chosen obligation of the English to assist the Sulus with such force as the situation of the Company's affairs would permit. This engagement could be interpreted in two senses. If affairs and policy rendered it desirable to avoid any hostilities with the aggressor of the Sulus, nobody could reproach the English with breach of faith when they refused to send any auxiliary troops at all. The diplomatic trick of one of their servants in stipulating such an engagement in such words saved the Directors all the troubles which might have been expected from Dalrymple's contracts.

But now the watching rivals became active. Manuel Antonio, Archbishop of Manila and late Governor of the Philippines, sent to the English Deputy Governor at Manila a fiery protest against this alliance and against their intention to send the exiled Sultan back to Jolo. This act, in his opinion, would endanger life, liberty and fortunes of the Spanish at Manila and in all the quarters which had to be preserved to them by the articles of capitulation. He alleged that such a stirring up and favouring of the Moors would

¹⁾ Appendix III.

occasion the destruction and extermination both of the European nations and of the Catholic religion in the East. Still more, he impressively represented that troubles between the two European powers concerned would inevitably arise, and that the King of Spain would avenge an injury of that »magnitude«. »I also acquaint you that a preliminary treaty of peace and a voluntary cession both of the Sultan and his son towards an establishment of the Spaniards both in Sulu and Basilan with other privileges in those islands have been made beforehand, preserving always those which the King of Spain had over them, these many years past, as the Prince and Sultan can tell, and both voluntarily and of their own accord presented them to me in letters signed by them.«¹⁾

The provisional answer of the Board to these pretensions, misrepresentations and lies was that the English had an undoubted right to make treaties with whomsoever they liked; that the alliance with the Sultan could not infringe on the articles of the capitulation of Manila as Sulu never was included in the Philippines, and that moreover self-preservation induced the Company's servants to make such alliances in answer to the Spaniards' open violations of the said articles in raising and fomenting continual troubles in and around Manila.

In the following year the restored Spanish Governor renewed his protests at Fort St. George, whose President and Council he had heard were going to enter into a treaty with Sulu for an establishment in its dominions. He declared these proceedings to be contrary to the existent international treaties, both that of Paris, concluded on 10 February 1763, and earlier ones. He laid stress on its being particularly contrary to the Treaty of Westphalia of 30 January 1648 made with the United Provinces of the Netherlands for the extension of their territory and concerning the navigation of the Spaniards in India.

This treaty had been guaranteed and acceded to by the King of England in that of 23 May 1667 concluded at Madrid. Here it was stipulated by the eighth Article that according to the desire of Spain all that had been granted to the United Provinces by the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Munster should be understood to be granted and made over to Great Britain.

It may be proper to give here in a few words the contents of the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Munster, in order to point out the falsity of the pretensions of the Spanish Governor.

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, 19 March 1763.

It stipulated that the contracting powers were to maintain the navigation and the trade to the East Indies but that both should abstain from extending them to the other's territories, and that both, Spaniards and Dutch, were to remain in possession of all the countries, fortresses etc. which at that moment respectively were under their jurisdiction.

Now, in 1648 the Spaniards possessed the Philippines, but they had given up all claim to, and withdrawn from, Sulu by the treaty of 1646, as is stated in the fourth paragraph of this chapter. Therefore the Dutch, and the English since 1667, had every right to settle in the Sulu dominions, though the Spanish Governor and his Jesuit colleagues pretended in their remonstrance that Sulu was included in the number of the Philippines, being situated within their limits, and that the King thereof was an ally and tributary to the most Catholic King of Spain. The argument of the Spaniards that the Sultan, moreover, had concluded a treaty of alliance and friendship with the former Governor, and that therefore all contracts since agreed to by him contrary to it »must be null and void« was very a weak one, because Alimud Din confessed that he had signed it under coercion.

Unfortunately, the Governor and Council at Fort St. George were little acquainted with the real facts. So they answered evasively that the protest was premature and founded merely on suspicions and conjecture, and that the English would not think of any establishment without being fully convinced of their right thereto. Besides, they confessed that during the war they had lodged some stores and goods at Sulu and that troops had been carried thither on their return from Manila owing to lack of conveyance; the Spaniards, however, could rely on the promise of the English to transport them from thence to Madras at the first opportunity.

What then had happened at Manila and Sulu to create such military preparations?

The Directors had sent orders of a nature likely to give a fresh impulse to the whole delayed undertaking.¹⁾ Being relieved from the dangers and embarrassments with which the long war had constantly threatened their affairs, they tried vigorously and with renewed energy to improve the trade. For this purpose the President and Council at Fort St. George were directed that, if they thought a residence at Sulu feasible, Dalrymple was »to be appointed our Resident there if he chooses it with one or two covenant servants to assist him, together

¹⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 13 May 1763.

Willi, The early relations of England with Borneo.

with a few other people¹⁾ and that he should enquire if a trade for purchasing pepper might be opened up at any place on the mainland of Borneo or on one of the adjacent islands. Such encouraging instructions came indeed at the right time, for at Sulu things had gone from bad to worse. The ship »Royal George« dispatched thither with Coast goods late in 1762 had lost its way.²⁾ Dalrymple, owing to letters received from home, had asked for permission to proceed to Europe. The President fortunately succeeded in persuading him to take his passage by Sulu and Canton in the »Neptune«, with goods for the Sulu market, where he should at least embark the goods which might have been provided by the natives according to the contract of 1762. In this manner he hoped to recover at least a part of the outstanding debts there, which amounted to 70,000 Spanish dollars.³⁾

On his arrival at Sulu Dalrymple met there the other rival who had been watching the proceedings of the English with an evil eye, the Dutch. They were endeavouring to cultivate an alliance with the Sulus, who, however, showed little inclination to comply with their wishes. In order to frustrate any further advance on their part, and to deprive them of the opportunity to command the seas in the East and Northeast of Borneo, he concluded a treaty⁴⁾ by which Sultan Alimud Din ceded to the English East India Company the southern part of Palawan, some places in North Borneo, and all the intermediate islands »to prevent all other European nations from passing or coming without the license of the said Company«.⁵⁾

This grant, far from being a trick of diplomacy, must have been enforced in a momentary anger against the Dutch, whose spy had come from Batavia with many presents for the Sultan and the *datus*.⁶⁾

The mention of this nation gives me the opportunity of saying a few words more about their further policy relative to the new English enterprises.

In the letter to Lord Halifax⁷⁾, Chief Secretary to the King, the Court of Directors continued in their complaints against the Dutch Company's servants in the Eastern Seas. They notified that in 1761

¹⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 13 May 1763.

²⁾ Madras Publ. Cons., 31 May 1763.

³⁾ Letters from Madras, 26 March 1764.

⁴⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo.

⁵⁾ Appendix IV.

⁶⁾ Home Miscell. 771, Dalrymple's letter to the Secret Committee, 7 Feb. 1764.

⁷⁾ Dutch Records A, N. 17, January 1764.

the »Warwick«, returning from China on the new route, had been boarded near the Moluccas by the Secretary of the Dutch establishment at Tidore, who had intimated to the captain that those seas were prohibited to all English vessels. At the same time he had handed him over a protest of the Governor and Director Jacob van Schoonderwoort at Ternate with the same contents, founded on exclusive treaties with the kings of Molucca, that these should not suffer any stranger, of whatever nation he may be, in or on their territories, and that »nobody but the Dutch Company had the right to navigate and trade there according to the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Munster, confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht«. ¹⁾

It is superfluous to point out the untenableness of these pretensions, as it is evident from the said Article that other nations were **not** excluded from navigating and trading in the Moluccas. Besides, all that had been granted to the United Provinces in 1648 had been made over to Great Britain in 1667.

The answer of the gallant Captain Mann Horner to the Dutch Secretary's memorial is worthy of preservation: »The English Company find it convenient to have their ships go to or return from China at all seasons of the year, and no nation or company is to prescribe bounds to their commerce or to make a track for their navigation«. ²⁾ With this he ordered the Secretary to leave his ship at once.

Things became much more serious when the Government at Batavia sent out a fleet of eight vessels. From a paper ³⁾ which the English intercepted they learnt that the purpose of these ships was to dislodge them from any new settlement they might form in the East and to extirpate all of them in the small island of Salwatti. Further orders contained in the same paper were to root out all other European interlopers and to set on fire all the English vessels in those quarters. As the Directors has received trustworthy information that the fleet had begun to cruise early in 1762, they humbly but earnestly begged the King to send some men-of-war for the protection of the Company's ships.

Lord Halifax, relying on the Dutch Company's former promise to withdraw their navy from India, feared to raise trouble and new suspicions on their part by increasing the English navy in the East. Accordingly he denied any reinforcements on the King's behalf, but recommended the Court to provide themselves a sufficient force to

¹⁾ Fact. Records, Borneo, dated 31st August 1761.

²⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo.

³⁾ Dutch Records A, N. 17, Secret Resolutions, Batavia, 22 December 1761.

withstand the Dutch, so that the affair might be restricted to Company against Company.¹⁾

The Directors, considering that the means of the Company were insufficient for such a large expense, repeated their entreaty a few days later, as more bad news had arrived from Bengal. By chance on the same day, 6 February 1764, the Dutch Ambassador at London, Count de Welderen, transmitted to the Earl of Sandwich complaints of the Dutch Company concerning grievances they had sustained from the servants of the English East India Company and the King's officers on the coasts of Sumatra, Ceylon and Bengal. They complained that the Government at Fort St. George had entered into negotiations with the King of Candia, with whom the Dutch were at war; that an English ship had taken possession of Natters and Tapioli in 1762; and that, owing to an alliance offensive and defensive with the Nabob, the English had begun hostilities against them.²⁾

With such a state of affairs, the Government at London could no longer reasonably remain inactive. The problem of the Company had assumed an international character and on its solution depended a European war. In the King's name the Earl of Sandwich requested from the Count de Welderen a detailed explanation with regard to the forces in India and the orders of the Dutch Government concerning the preservation of peace between the two rival Companies. Further, he was asked to explain the reasons for the equipment of a fleet at Batavia in 1761 and to give satisfaction for the »Warwick« having been detained by the Secretary at Tidore.

The Dutch Representative soon gave a satisfactory reply to the two first requests, but the other two points had to be answered by the Assembly of Seventeen at the Hague.

Sir Joseph Yorke, the English Ambassador at the Hague, was directed by the King to take the necessary steps in order to obtain satisfaction. Included in his instructions was a letter from Fort Marlborough, by which the Directors had judged that the Dutch armament was directed against their enterprise at Sulu.³⁾ Meanwhile, it had

¹⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17, Message from Lord Halifax, 2 February 1764.

²⁾ State Papers Foreign, Dutch, 6 February 1764.

³⁾ State Papers Foreign, Dutch, 7 Febr. 1764. This letter informed the Secret Committee that the servants of the Dutch Company at Chinsura had often asked John Herbert about the intentions of the English at Sulu, and whether they had already established a settlement there.

been agreed that both Companies were to send orders to their servants to keep peace and amity.¹⁾

Concerning the memorial of the Governor of Tennate Sir Joseph Yorke was informed by the Government of the States General that the Dutch Company had suspected the English of disturbing them in the spice trade, and that they therefore continued to insist on their exclusive right to navigate in the Moluccas.²⁾ Upon this, George III. energetically protested against such a presumption, saying that he would never consent to it and that Great Britain would be compelled to regard a continuance in it as an act of hostility.³⁾

The reply Yorke received was of quite a conciliatory character. The Dutch Government laid stress upon the fact that they did not think of confining the navigation of the English in the East, but that their orders, issued in 1759, meant that they could not suffer foreign vessels within the usual tracks that were to be observed by all seafaring nations.⁴⁾ Count de Welderen further informed Lord Halifax that the armament in 1761 had not been equipped against the English or any other European nation, but merely for the protection of the establishments and the trade of the Dutch Company, and that it was destined to cruise off the coasts of Coromandel, Ceylon and Bengal.⁵⁾

With these declarations the British Government was satisfied, and according to mutual agreement the King and the States General directed their respective Companies to dispatch orders of the same tenor to their servants in the East, to keep peace and friendship with each other. Upon one subject both Companies, however, could not agree. The Dutch Company stipulated that the Companies should be prohibited from assisting their allies in India. The English, anxious for their alliance with the Nabob, demanded that the Europeans could assist the native allies if they wished. The Directors, fearing also for their establishments on the west coast of Sumatra, and concluding from the insincerity of the Dutch that they would not be surprised if subsequently they made also claims to Sulu, therefore asked Lord Halifax for the further Royal protection, and for orders to the navy in India to assist the rights of the Company.⁶⁾

¹⁾ Dutch Records A, N. 17, 6 March 1764.

²⁾ State Papers Foreign, Dutch, Letter of Yorke, 24 Feb. 1764.

³⁾ Ditto, Letters of the Earl of Sandwich to Sir J. Yorke 28 Feb.; 6 March 1764.

⁴⁾ Ditto, Letter from Yorke, 9 March 1764.

⁵⁾ Dutch Records A, No. 17, 25 May 1764.

⁶⁾ Ibid.

But the Dutch did not make any claims on Sulu, and their endeavours to keep the English off by entering into a treaty with the Sultan were frustrated by the aversion of the latter and Dalrymple's prompt interference. They no longer molested the intercourse of the English, but even, in contradiction to the Spanish, encouraged it, either from sincerity or, what is more likely, from a desire to cause new troubles between England and Spain, by pretending that the English Company had an ancient right to the island of »Paragna«¹⁾, which, however, neither party was ever able to prove.

* * *

After having obtained the cession of South Palawan and some districts in North Borneo, Dalrymple did his utmost to recover the considerable balance at Sulu, whither he repaired again from Manila in the »London«, 6 October 1763, instead of proceeding to China²⁾ and Europe. At the same time he took back the Sultan to Sulu.

In the last period Alexander Dalrymple developed such an unbounded activity and restlessness in pushing on affairs, regardless of all warnings and cautions addressed by Fort St. George and the Directors, that he rose to such a height that a severe fall was inevitable.

He soon found out that the pretensions of the Spanish in Sulu, Palawan and all the towns in Borneo which they alleged to have received, granted by Alimud Din during his exile at Manila, were merely founded on an act of necessity,³⁾ besides being falsified by their inserting names of places later on which had not been in the Malay original. But as it would be easy for the Spaniards to prove that the Sultan had not acted under compulsion, Dalrymple made him declare, based on the feudal system of government of Sulu, that no treaty concluded by the Sovereign in his absence from Sulu should be in force, either with English or Spaniards or any other power, and that he, on the other hand, would ratify the treaty of 1761 concluded with Bantila and the datus.

Safe against any further claims on the part of the Spanish, he however experienced more and more the untrustworthiness of the Sulus, people and Sovereign, who were never able to fulfil in any way their engagements. In addition to this, the fact that the country itself produced almost no article for commerce made it clear enough to him

¹⁾ Paragna, or Palaran for Palawan may still be found on old English charts.

²⁾ Home Misc. 771. Letter from Manila, 1 February 1764.

³⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Dalrymple's letter to Secret Committee 7 February 1764.

that a fort on that island would never be of any profit to the Company, but would, on the contrary, raise disgust among its inhabitants.

The advantages of Balambangan, as already exhibited, presented themselves in gradually clearer light, and some slight allusions as to its definite cession to the Company were not abruptly repulsed on the part of the Sultan.

The final assent to this project, however, was attended by events of an international character which swept him into a current till then carefully avoided by him.

By the Treaty of Paris the Philippines were to be restored to Spain. Yet in the East the restitution orders could not come into operation for a year, and during this time matters there turned into confusion. Altercations and disputes between the King's representatives, the Company's servants and the Spaniards¹⁾ grew worse and worse, and had almost reached their climax when the new Spanish Governor arrived from Acapulco with the order from the English Crown for the cession of the Philippines on 6 March 1764. Deputy Governor Drake, tired of the interminable quarrels, had retired, and Alexander Dalrymple, proposed by the Council, had accepted the position of Provisional Deputy Governor in order to carry out the restoration order. From this appointment arose new disputes with the King's officers. Captain Steigh, one of them, supported by many others, pretended that with Drake's resignation his and the Company's authority expired. These events made such a bad impression on all present, that though the restoration of the Philippines on 1 April 1764 officially, took place in some order, long afterwards protests were addressed to Madras against the shameful behaviour of the English at Manila²⁾ Mr. Crawford was appointed President at Manila, where the troops received orders to return to Madras.

This welcome opportunity was seized by Alexander Dalrymple as the best means of crowning his enterprise by an emphatic demonstration that his masters were ready to expend all for obtaining and preserving a new establishment. The ships returning with the troops from Manila left him at Sulu with the »London« and two smaller vessels containing from 1200 to 1400 Chinese, caffres and sepoys with

¹⁾ Sir W. Draper accused the brothers of the Order of Augustine of having instigated the people there to rebel and to murder the English whenever they could meet them unarmed. (State Papers, Foreign, Spain, 165 — Draper's letter of 4 August 1764.)

²⁾ Madras Military Consult, 24 September 1764; 2 November 1764.

a large quantity of military stores,¹⁾ to the immense astonishment of Governor and Council at Madras, the Court of Directors and still more the Spanish Governor at Manila, who sent the protest to Fort St. George which has already been alluded to. These could not believe »though informed by private hand of purposes making a settlement on the islands of Balambangan on the north end of Borneo«²⁾ that this Company's servant could undertake such a step without previously having informed or consulted them. Yet Dalrymple had done so. He had taken the decisive step necessary for establishing a factory at Balambangan, by receiving the ratification of its session, together with the full grant of the part of Borneo from Towsan Abai to Kimanis, the island of Palawan, and all the other islands to the northward of Borneo.³⁾ These territories were ceded to the Company by way of sale by Sultan Alimud Din (Mahomed Allimodin) on 29 June 1764, and it was understood that the Company should give the government of these countries and islands to one of his sons. On July 2nd following the Sultan wrote out the cession, which was signed by datus representing the nobility of the people.⁴⁾ On the 30th of the same month the Sultan's eldest son, Datu Sarapodin (Israel) was vested with power and authority to take upon him the government of these countries on behalf of the English East India Company, which commission, granted by Dalrymple for the Company, was countersigned by Alimud Din I.⁵⁾

To compel the Sulus to keep their engagements, a perpetual treaty of friendship and commerce followed the grant on 28 September 1764. It renewed and completed that of 1761, granting the English the right to build a factory, to purchase ground for plantations, and to have free trade exempted from duties except on contraband. It was agreed that the new Chinese settlers were to be under English jurisdiction, as well, as the Sulus, while in their service, and that the English had the right to kill thieves and to shoot at people approaching their factory and ships by night. Other Europeans and English traders were not to be admitted without the Company's permission. All persons belonging to the Company should have the right to come and go freely in all territories of the Sultan, and their ships might call at all ports; only

¹⁾ Letters from Madras, 20 October 1764; 24 October 1764.

²⁾ Ditto.

³⁾ Appendix V.

⁴⁾ Factory Records, Borneo, Dalrymple's Case.

⁵⁾ Ditto.

in the out-ports they were prevented from purchasing birds' nests. Again the contracting parties engaged to give each other mutual assistance.

The contents of this so-called treaty of friendship clearly show that it was made under the compelling influence of a large military force, and may account for the brief duration of the »perpetual« peace. Another reason why the treaty only lasted two or three months may have been that it depended on the man whose personality and influence had induced the Sulus to agree to it.

Ill luck, however, and discouraging messages from London and Madras, made the author of the treaty desert his own work. On 24 November of the same year he was in China on his way to England to plead there for a continuance of the work which — alas! completed one year too late — in the meantime had been entirely given up. At Canton he learnt from a private letter his appointment as President of any establishment he might form. Though this direction of the Court had reached Fort St. George already in January 1774, Pigot's successor had not considered it worth while to forward it to Sulu or Manila. Dalrymple confessed that, if he had known of his appointment before, he would not have returned to Europe until the debts at Sulu had been discharged and Balambangan perfectly secured.¹⁾

The Directors, always wavering between hope and discouragement as to the success at Sulu, changed their minds with every good or bad account from Madras, of which the latter more and more prevailed, as all endeavours failed to recover the outstanding debts. Though in general the Court's orders confirmed Dalrymple's proceedings, they were expressed ambiguously, neither clearly encouraging nor definitely restraining him. The policy of the Court of Directors was one of mediocrity, a true copy of that of the bigot, George III. and his ministers after Pitt's fall, a policy of petty compromises and dogged meandering through problems, keeping isolated from other nations to secure party triumphs.

To this wavering policy of the Directors Dalrymple's impetuous course may be attributed, and it is not surprising that when ever their orders reached the East matters had gone much further than they had anticipated.

Before the worst news from Sulu arrived, the Court sent their last orders to Fort St. George relative to the intercourse they had to entertain with Sulu.²⁾ Thinking the recovery of the debts, there im-

¹⁾ Factory Records, Borneo, Dalrymple's letter to the Court, 26 August 1768.

²⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 14 February 1766.

possible, they directed them to forbid any European ship to trade thither, with the provision that in better times trade might successfully be reopened »on a very different plan«. They advised the President »to be careful that you do not by any act otherwise renounce any right which the Company might derive from the grants of the Sultan to settle on Borneo, Balambangan or other islands but to continue a friendship with the Sultan«. Further, they were to avoid any steps in those quarters that might give umbrage to the Spaniards, whose claims on Sulu, still not given up by them, though never acknowledged by the English, could not be repudiated now with necessary demonstrations. Finally in order to prevent their reckless servants from possibly upsetting the relations with the Sultan by their impudent and violent conduct, none were to be suffered to trade in those seas without a special pass and licence from one of the presidencies.

However, these instructions, somewhat clearer and more definite, than many others though still not giving evidence of great diplomatic genius, came too late, for relations with Sulu had taken quite a different course from that which the London Directors imagined, and had become far from friendly or amiable.

When Dalrymple sailed from Sulu for China towards the end of September 1764, he left there troops still amounting to 400 men, promising them that within two months two ships should be sent to take them back to the Coast. He accordingly left them plenty of money for such a period. But as no ship came until March,¹⁾ the dissensions developed into open hostilities, partly due to the insolent behaviour of the militia towards the Sulus and partly to the treacherous character and predatory inclinations of the natives, which became increasingly evident when the soldiers, after spending their first weeks in idle luxury, began to suffer from want of supplies. They refused to assist the English with any provisions, and whenever »a dispute arose with one of their own people they surrounded the English and killed some of them.«²⁾

¹⁾ This melancholy accident can in no way be attributed to Dalrymple's negligence. When in January 1765 he directed the factors to send ships to Sulu to withdraw the troops, only the „London“, in which he had sailed, returned thither, probably no other convenient vessel being available. The one great charge that may be imputed to him is that he left the troops there at all. That was indeed a fault of his which cannot entirely be pardoned, though it may be said in his favour that it was impossible to foresee that the keeping of the Malay's promise depended on his presence. (Madras Publ. Cons. 15 July 1765. Letter from A. Dalrymple, Canton, 16 January 1765.

²⁾ Madras Military Proceedings, 15 July 1765. Letter from Captain Desplan at Sulu 19 March 1765.

The Sultan and his eldest son Israel proved far from being friendly to the Europeans, and his second son even owed his unpopularity to his assisting the English.

As soon as this news reached Fort St. George the »Patty Snow«, Captain Dodwell, was dispatched with letters and presents to the Sultan and his eldest son, in order to bring back the men and stores thence. Some quantities of blue and white longcloths were put on board for sale. The benefit of this was to be distributed among the starving sepoys,¹⁾ who in the meantime had applied to Manila for help, where the English Resident had advanced them 2,300 dollars, while the Spanish Governor had promised to issue orders that care should be taken of them at Zamboanga if they found means to reach there.²⁾ The »Patty« came just in time to save the remaining 300 sepoys. But the outstanding debt, amounting to nearly 55,000 dollars, could not be recovered. In the letter of April 1766 the Governor and Council informed the Directors that they were not in possession of any of the grants or treaties which Dalrymple had obtained from the King of Sulu.³⁾ They, however, advised the Court not to renounce any right to Sulu. A last attempt to recover at least part of the balance was made early in 1768 from Fort St. George,⁴⁾ but it failed, like all the preceding efforts and that of the »Royal George«, to renew a trade at Bandjermasin.⁵⁾

The withdrawal of the half-starved sepoys from Sulu, who had to endure another long year of bad treatment, suffering and hunger on sea until they reached Madras, proved to be the last scene of this long act of preparing the establishment of a settlement amidst two rival nations among the treacherous Malayan population.

¹⁾ Madras Publ. Consult., 22 July 1765.

²⁾ Letters from Madras, 1 April 1766.

³⁾ Dalrymple took all the treaties and grants to Europe, without presenting them to Fort St. George. Therefore, as he had only provisional power, they were not binding for the Company until ratified by the Directors, which was apparently never done. For when he arrived in London in July 1765, and asked permission to state before a General Court the advantages of intercourse with the eastern islands, his request was transferred to the Committee of Correspondence, which, however, either mislaid it or purposely never took it into consideration. It was only some years later, when the project was again discussed with a view to being carried out on a different footing, that he was requested to deliver all treaties, contracts, grants, and copies of them to the Company.

⁴⁾ Madras Public Cons. 8 March 1768.

⁵⁾ Letters from Madras, 2 January 1767.

Why it was not more successful may have been seen in the course of its development. Begun with energy at a period when the whole world was distraught with war, it nevertheless was crowned with success because it was undertaken by a man of great ability and capacity just a short time after a general peace removed the hindrances which had threatened its early progress. But, as has been the case ever since war and peace mutually govern mankind, the energies too much strained by war sink into relaxation, and an overpowering sense of nervous fatigue invades whole nations. To this circumstance on the one hand may be attributed the want of energy in the policy of the Directors concerning the project in the East after 1763; while, on the other hand, excessive zeal, lack of candour, sincerity and openness have almost an equal share in the apparently small result which, by contemporaries, was described more severely as failure. Happily it was only apparently a failure, for while President and Council at Fort St. George were still endeavouring to make it good in the old manner, viz. by securing the outstanding debts, at home a new scheme had been planned, by which a new and larger enterprise was to be founded on this so-called failure, by quite different methods.

Chapter III.
The First Balambangan Period.
1768—1775.

§ 1.

**New Steps taken at Home for Extending the
Trade of the Company.**

It cannot be a mere accident that when in 1767 the indefatigable Alexander Dalrymple made proposals for a voyage to the South Seas to make discoveries for the Company¹⁾, the Court of Directors, though they did not comply with this scheme, three months later referred to the Joint Committee of Correspondence and Treasury the consideration »of the most effectual measures for extending the trade of the Company«.²⁾

From the following proceedings it may be concluded what importance was attached to this new attempt. In striking contrast to all preceding similar ventures, this time it was not to be a haphazard voyage of discovery, but all *pros and cons* were first to be maturely studied and weighed against each other. If it should be found that no insurmountable difficulties were likely to arise from too heavy expenses or from political troubles with other European nations, immediate steps might be taken to realise it. Therefore we are not surprised that the enquiries on this subject occupied the Joint Committee a full half year, and resulted in their proposing a settlement in the eastern parts of India to dispose of European goods and to obtain different valuable commodities in return. Further, they were of opinion that for this purpose an establishment and free port on the north-east side of Borneo would prove beneficial, it being well situated for attracting the vessels of the

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 30 June 1767.

²⁾ Home Misc. 771, 30 September 1767.

rich adjacent countries and islands. They, however, strongly recommended that accurate information about the produce of that country should be collected and that they should find out if the trade and customs there might support the charges; if this trade were liable to great and frequent interruptions by the Dutch; if the Prince of that district were likely to make a grant to the Company; and if the Dutch had any claim to that country. Above all, they insisted on apprising the Government of this plan and asking for their favour and protection.¹⁾

In order to clear up all these questions more men of ability were consulted, among whom Dalrymple undoubtedly definitely turned the scale in favour of Balambangan as the centre of the future trade with these eastern islands and the coast of Cochin China.²⁾ Complying with the orders of the Directors to nominate persons for the management of the undertaking, the Committee of Correspondence proposed that the Governor and Council of Fort St. George should be directed to send proper persons to take possession of that island and that the design should be communicated to the King and his ministers.³⁾

This last proposal and the Directors' carrying out of it, mark a new period in the history of the Company's relations with Borneo and signify a new progress in the extension of the British Empire. For with it a new stone was to be set in the richly speckled mosaic of its present colonies. Till then neither the Government nor the Company had ever thought of acquiring possessions so far in the East and so distant from their other settlements. Borneo had always been looked upon merely as a spot for trade in connection with that of China, and for improving it. Dalrymple's plans and achievements had been rejected by the Directors as far as they concerned the acquisition of a place which would have exposed them to great expense, but still more to severe conflicts with the Dutch or Spaniards at a time when the Government, being exhausted by the long war and occupied with internal strife, was absolutely unable to promise or grant them any protection against foreign powers. But now in 1768, when the disputes between the Government, the Parliament and the country had reached their height, the ministry itself torn with dissension, the Company found it a good opportunity to apply for the King's protection for a scheme with which he could not but comply in order to have at least one strong adherent.

¹⁾ Home Misc. 771, 26 February, 1, 8. 22 March 1768.

²⁾ Ditto, 7 July 1768.

³⁾ Court Minutes, 11 August 1768, fol. 171.

This petition, dated 28 October 1768,¹⁾ is of double importance in so far as it gives at the same time the full purport of the proposed undertaking. The Directors stated that, as their endeavours tended not only to the Company's, but also to the national, benefit, they thought themselves right in asking his Lordship to make a favourable statement to the King that he might grant the Company his Royal protection and support in their taking possession of the small island of Balambangan.

The objects of their undertaking were reported to be as follows:

Firstly: By procuring a colony of Chinese to settle at Balambangan, and by engaging the Chinese junks to visit and dispose of their cargoes there, they hoped to divert the Chinese trade into that channel.

Secondly: Thus it would be possible to extend the sale of the manufactures of Great Britain to Cochin China, and to get from there commodities which till then could be procured only from Canton at high prices.

Thirdly: At the same time a market might be opened for the consumption of Bengal manufactures. The consequence of this addition to the balance of trade in favour of Bengal would be an increase of the circulating specie in the Bengal provinces.

Fourthly: Last but not least, the trade of the Company could thus be extended into the unfrequented parts of Asia.

The Company had, we see, great expectations as to the future of the new establishment, which hopes were not modified by their last experiences at Sulu. They were chiefly, or almost exclusively, founded on Dalrymple's report and papers which he had in the meantime given up at the Court's request,²⁾ and that he had based his hopes on an illogical doctrine has already been pointed out in the preceding chapter. Therefore the first part of their expectations were chimerical from the very foundation. How could they expect to concentrate the immense Chinese trade which was carried on by hundreds of junks yearly in one small island situated on their track which led only to the Moluccas and the eastern coast of Borneo? And could they hope to extend their trade in the East to a great extent considering that the Dutch, the Spaniards, and the Portuguese had been trading there for one or two centuries?

¹⁾ Home Misc. 771, Letter to Lord Viscount Weymouth.

²⁾ Court Minutes 1768, fol. 262.

The question may be put, what did they understand by the »unfrequented parts of Asia«? This might be either the most easterly islands, such as New Guinea, or probably Japan and North China. I should be inclined to give precedence to the first hypothesis, as in the course of this venture an expedition was indeed sent to those quarters. That North China was included has been evident from the petition to the King.

Most probably good results might have been expected from the scheme to extend the sale of British manufactures to Cochin China and the northern parts of China, connected with the purchase of commodities there at lower prices than at Canton. But in order to obtain this Balambangan would have to be a great emporium for the exchange of European goods for those coming from the North. This required at least a wide harbour, quite a town of factories, store-houses and wharves, with a large number of Europeans and natives or Chinese. And was this small uninhabited island capable of providing for such a vast population, even supposing it were as fertile as Dalrymple had described it? That was a question which might have occupied the Directors, but not troubled them; for the eighteenth century was ready to answer it in the affirmative, believing in the advantage of a small island as a headquarter for commerce. Here again, only fifty years later, Raffles was the first to prove that a settlement, founded merely on trade and depending entirely on the import of supplies, was doomed to stagnation and ruin from its very beginning. Chiefly for this reason the attempt was going to fail again, though all other conditions seemed to favour it in every respect, and although it was given a new impulse by its favourable acceptance by the Government.

George III. was rejoiced at the Company's plan for extending their trade, but he was still more pleased and surprised to find »that they desire his protection with regard to a measure upon which he has never been consulted.«¹⁾ At the same time, however, this pleasure was troubled by a somewhat bitter astonishment, caused by the news that »for the first time they have ordered their servants to take possession of an island without the least information of any other right upon which this measure is founded, except that of utility nor any account by which His Majesty might judge whether it can interfere with the subsisting treaties with other States or give umbrage to those powers with which he is upon terms of amity and friendship.«²⁾ He

¹⁾ Home Misc. 771, Letter from Lord Weymouth 24 Nov. 1768.

²⁾ Ibid.

therefore ordered them to send him all the papers and descriptions of that island, that he himself might judge if their proceedings might be regarded as an infringement of the rights of any power, in which case he would withdraw from them his protection hitherto always awarded.

It is characteristic of the power the Company had attained that the Directors dared play such a double game with their King. Without informing the Governement of their plan, though they had long before had the firm intention of imploring the King's protection, they had sent orders to Bombay¹⁾ that an armed vessel should be prepared to take possession of Balambangan »in the name of the King of Great Britain and of the East India Company« by virtue of a grant from the Sultan of Sulu to the Company in 1764.

What arrogance! What temerity on the part of the Directors to order their servants to take possession of territories in the King's name before having learnt his opinion concerning the matter! Proceedings of that kind were, in a double sense, not fair play. They must be judged as arrogant and disloyal towards a monarch. They were the more unfair as the Directors cowardly profited by the King's plight, from which cause, as they knew only too well, he was compelled to wink at their offence. On the other hand, it was not fair play that they pretended to take possession of the island by virtue of a grant which they never had approved and acknowledged. In ordinary times, and from a king who felt himself a little safer on the throne than George III. did in the first ten years of his reign, they would have reaped a much severer and well-deserved rebuke.

The Directors tried to justify themselves and their cause²⁾ by relying upon the Company's charter by which they were entitled to trade to and to form settlements anywhere in India with the consent of the natives, und to possess themselves of any uninhabited place for establishing and extending their trade. In order to prove that in the present case they had every possible right to convert Balambangan into a trading centre, they sent in copies of the grants of Banguey, Balambangan, etc., etc., together with a statement of Dalrymple. In this it was proved that the Spaniards could make no claims on the island, it being situated considerably without those limits to which Pope Alexander VI. had confined both the navigation and the trade of Spain, which boundaries had been agreed to by other European Powers

¹⁾ Home Misc. 771, General Letter to Bombay 4 Nov. 1768; Ditto to Bengal and Madras 11 Nov. 1768.

²⁾ Ditto, 771, Letter to Lord Weymouth 16 Dec. 1768.

in the treaties of Westphalia and Utrecht. The Dutch, the Court mentioned, had never made any claims to Sulu or Balambangan.

That the Directors, however, were not quite certain in their pretensions is evident from the orders they sent to the East. These recommended utmost speed and profound secrecy, that no other power might learn of the design. If they found another European settled there they were to abstain from any attempt to land or act in an aggressive manner. In this case their ship was to try to acquire possession of any other place included in the said grants. Should they succeed at Balambangan, the ship had to stay there, that it might protect the settlement against any attack later on.

While the Company's statements in its second letter were under consideration at St. Jame's Palace, the Directors, partly on account of Dalrymple's urging them to lose no time,¹⁾ continued the preparations by directing the Committee of Shipping to treat for a ship, to nominate commander and officers and to make the necessary provisions for establishing a settlement at Balambangan. At the same time, the Committee of Correspondence had to propose proper persons for the management of the undertaking,²⁾ and Fort St. George and Bengal were informed that the King had granted the countenance of a man-of-war.³⁾

Yet when all seemed to be favourable, an unexpected difficulty arose from the exorbitant claims which Dalrymple made as a condition of his leading the expedition. He wanted to be appointed captain of the ship and to have the choice of the crew. Further, as he did not desire »to eat the bread of idleness« and partly for his services during fifteen to twenty years, he thought himself entitled to the following claims: The Company should bear all his expenses in the expedition and grant him a commission of four per cent on all cargoes bought and sold at Balambangan, and one more per cent to the other persons on the ship. He demanded preference to get the government of the new settlement. At the expiration of three years from the departure the sum of 8,000 pounds should be given him. Should the expedition fail, by any unforeseen accident, the Company were to restore him to his service in the bank and to grant him or, in case of his death, to his heirs, the said sum of £ 8,000.⁴⁾

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 10 July 1769, fol. 125.

²⁾ Ditto, 20 June 1769, fol. 77.

³⁾ Dispatches to Bombay, 31 March 1769; ditto to Madras and Bengal 30 June 1769.

⁴⁾ Home Misc. 771. At a Committee of Correspondence 20 and 23 Aug. 1769.

These pretensions were indeed not modest, but those of a man who was only too well aware of his merits and indispensability. But instead of being prepared to meet the Directors, and cut down his pretensions in deference to their opinion and claims, Dalrymple was stubbornly determined to have them complied with in every detail.

It is of little interest to follow the long, tiresome, and unprofitable bargaining on both sides. Dalrymple relentlessly demanded that the absolute management should be vested in him without control, while the Court of Directors insisted on their appointing all the officers, civil and military servants, and on their establishing a Council to direct all operations, in which Dalrymple was to have the casting vote. Their terms were that he was to enjoy a salary of a thousand pounds per annum during the expedition, besides the commission he had asked for, and the preference in the appointment to the government. Instead of granting him the £ 8000 in case of misfortune, the Directors reserved to themselves the right to fix a suitable sum.

These tedious negotiations were abruptly terminated by the somewhat sudden and unexplained resolution of the Court to postpone the expedition for that year, although George III. had ordered Sir John Lindsay, appointed Commander in Chief of all his ships of war, frigates, and armed vessels in the East Indies, to assist and protect the Company in founding the new establishment and to co-operate with its servants.¹⁾

It seems that from Dalrymple's letter of 22nd September 1769 new suspicions arose concerning the legality of making a settlement at Balambangan.

Once more, on 30th November, he laid stress on the necessity of hastening the preparations for the expedition, as the interference of the Dutch might be expected if the Directors waited another year, so that the ship would not arrive at Balambangan till May 1771, at a time when all the Chinese junks would have returned to Canton for a whole year.

The consequence was that a wholesome draught of fresh air pervaded the India House. A special Committee for Balambangan wisely found out again that no legal difficulties would prevent them from taking possession of that place, but that once more the sentiments of the King's ministers should be ascertained and that Lord Weymouth should again be troubled with exactly the same letters as those which

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 1 and 6 Sept. 1769, fol. 205; Home Misc. 771, 6, 8, 13 Sept. 1769; Dispatches to Madras, 8, 15 Sept. 1769; Ditto to Bengal and Bombay, 15 Sept. 1769.

had been sent to him one and a half years ago.¹⁾ And this when the Company's seryants at Bombay had months ago acted according to the orders sent them in November 1768!

Is it to be wondered at that Lord Weymouth's answer²⁾ begins »I am as much surprised at this question put by the Company's Chairman in a letter of 20th March if his Lordship had anything against the immediate execution of the expedition, as in October 1768 when I learnt you had already then sent expresse order overland to take that country«?

The Directors may also have felt disconcerted by the enclosure in Lord Weymouth's reply of a letter from Dalrymple in which he had implored his Lordship to hasten with his answer to the Company as they would not take any step before! Though Lord Weymouth, as he confessed, was not accustomed to receive advice from a Company's servant, he requested the Court not to neglect Dalrymple. So new negotiations were carried on for many months between the Company and that servant respecting the necessary regulations and the terms both parties had to proffer. At last the discussions in which Captain Howe had become involved by Dalrymple, who had proposed to proceed in company with him, attained a definite form by the Directors giving their last concessions. These were that the command of the ship to be employed should be confided to Alexander Dalrymple, but that the officers were to be appointed by the Court of Directors, who would have regard to his recommendation. Contrary to his proposals to proceed direct to Balambangan without touching at any other residence, the ship was to proceed to Madras, where the Select Committee or the Commissioners of the East should decide whether the expedition should be suspended or not. At the new settlement all affairs with European Powers and all the things relative to trade should be left to the Chief and Council to be appointed for the management, while all the internal affairs concerning the natives were to be settled by the Chief, Alexander Dalrymple. For the general management of the Company's affairs by Chief and Council they should be subject to the orders of the Court of Directors.³⁾

At Dalrymple's advice, preparations were made to bring on board the »Britannia« stores for the Balambangan market, such as cloths, iron,

¹⁾ Correspondence Minutes, 8 Feb. 1770, fol. 131; Court Minutes, 9, 10 Feb. 1770, fol. 435.

²⁾ Home Misc., 771, 29 March 1770.

³⁾ Ditto, 771, At a Court of Directors 25 July 1770.

steel and lead, glassware, gold and silver lace, arms and ammunitions, guns and blunderbusses, printed cotton, every branch of woollen manufactures, boat compasses and beads.¹⁾ For, as news had arrived from Bombay that the island had been taken possession of, everyone thought that a market there would flourish as soon as European stores and provisions arrived.

But all at once things went wrong.

Captain Howe declined employment in the expedition, where he was to hold only a subordinate position.

Lord Rocheford, to whom the Company had applied for a Royal letter to the Sultan of Sulu, advised them that George III. refused to issue a letter of recommendation, not being sufficiently informed of the rights of the Sultan and of the objections which might be made by other powers against the projected settlement; that he, on the contrary, strictly directed them not to offer any violence to the Spaniards settled in Palawan, and to abstain from giving assistance to the Sultan of Mindanao in the war he was carrying on against them.²⁾

Dalrymple's disputes with the Committee of Correspondence and of Shipping on petty, small points concerning the provision, the crew, etc., soon turned into invectives and offences. He reproached the Court with not having kept their contract, as they appointed one of the two factors from London, and not from Madras as had been agreed between them on 5th September 1770, the day when they by ballot had resolved that the government of the said island and the dependencies thereof be placed in the hands of Mr. Alexander Dalrymple as Chief, and two persons of Council with the following allowances:

The Chief: £1000	} per annum.
Second: £400	
Third: £300	

that they be allowed to draw a commission of ten per cent on the net purchase and sale of all cargoes for three years... whereupon Mr. Alexander Dalrymple was called in and sworn as Chief of Balambangan and Commander of the ship to be consigned to that island.³⁾

These unfortunate quarrels led to a catastrophe when Dalrymple asked for his six months' salary on 14th March, basing his claim on the fact that he had been sworn as Commander of the »Britannia« and

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 3, 8, August 1770, fol. 121.

²⁾ Home Misc., 771, Letter from Lord Rocheford, 14 March 1771.

³⁾ Court Minutes, 5 September 1770, fol. 148 & 150.

Chief of Balambangan half a year ago, and that the Company was to regard and pay him as such; the more as he all the time had been employed in providing the necessaries for the expedition.

The Directors insisted on the stipulation that the fixed salary was to commence on the arrival at Balambangan and that, in case the expedition should be stopped there, or already before at Madras, he would merely be entitled to a compensation for his services. Besides, considering that a new settlement must require the greatest »address, moderation and judgment, and that the principal person of such an undertaking should pay a due deference and obedience to this Court«, and because Alexander Dalrymple, from his conduct and late appearing, was found to be a very improper person, they resolved unanimously »that he be dismissed the Company's service«.¹⁾ Instead, the Committee of Shipping was instructed to take care of the ship »Britannia«.

In other words, the whole enterprise received its death-blow before the first man and vessel left the shores of England!

And whose fault was it?

Both parties shared in it. Theoretically, the Directors were right in refusing the salary before the »Britannia« arrived at Balambangan. Had Dalrymple shown more modesty and patience, they undoubtedly later on would have granted him what they now declined. But from his behaviour towards them, I can imagine that they were glad to get rid of a man who so early had manifested despotic and absolutist inclinations, and who certainly would have followed the same course he had taken in 1763 and 1764, without informing and consulting them.

Transported by unbounded zeal and self-confidence, Dalrymple forgot that he was still the Company's servant, and that not he but the Directors afterwards would be answerable to the Government and the English nation for anything he committed.

What arouses our sympathy is that in spite of his crushing humiliation Dalrymple continued to offer his advice and service for the undertaking, which were not entirely refused. The Court, on their side, refunded to him all the disbursements he had had on account of the cargo of the »Britannia«.²⁾

* * *

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21 March 1771.

²⁾ Home Misc., 771, Minutes of Committee of Shipping, 1 and 29 May 1771.

As the Committee of Shipping had continued in making preparations for the execution of the project, Dalrymple's dismissal for the moment had no further consequences.

Captain James Swithin was entrusted with the command of the »Britannia«, and took the oath against trading to or from the East Indies without the Company's license.¹⁾

John Herbert, a covenant servant at Fort Marlborough, received orders to wait at Fort St. George for the arrival of the »Britannia«, in order to take over the management of the undertaking, in company with Tierney, from the same place, as Second in Council.²⁾ All the officers and seamen appointed by the Directors were engaged for four years, at the expiration of which term they were to be discharged and furnished with a passage home at the Company's expense if desired.

On 12 June 1771 Captain Swithin received his final orders. A separate letter to Bombay of the same date contained in sixty paragraphs the directions for the new »independent Chiefship«. Letters of recommendation were addressed to the Sultans of Sulu and Mindanao and to other eastern princes. Dispatches to the Chief and Council at Anjengo and to the Agent and Council at Bussora instructed them to forward duplicates of the said instructions and letters to Madras and Bencoolen with the utmost speed, and to assist the enterprise with every possible means.

To give all the instructions would occupy too much space, though, with few exceptions, all are of a certain importance and should be remembered in the course of the events. I will limit myself to a few, and in order to prevent repetition they will be given with paragraphs as in the original.

§ 5 directed that the Balambangan settlement should not be under direction of either Presidency, which were only to assist it by advice and means.

§ 7. Should the place be found in the possession of another European power of an inferior force, this power was to be desired to quit it as belonging to the English, but without commencing hostilities. Under § 13 hostilities were only forbidden against the Spaniards on Palawan, to which island the latter had ancient claims!

§ 8. In case of some disappointment in quietly taking possession of Balambangan they should establish themselves either in North Borneo or on some adjacent island.

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 1 May 1771.

²⁾ Home Misc., 771, General Letter to Bencoolen 17 May 1771.

The following passages ordered Chief and Council to use the »*Britannia*« as a floating factory and warehouse until they should have built proper warehouses and habitations and erected a stockade to protect them.

§ 12. The Sultan of Sulu should be induced to conclude and give a new treaty and grant, signed by him, the princes, the estates and the Company's servants.

The next paragraphs fixed the trade to be carried on chiefly by barter; that, however, the two Presidencies were to deliver them £5,000 in current coin; that Captain Swithin was to touch at Cape of Good Hope to provide there a breed of sheep, vines, plants, and seeds of all sorts that they might be propagated and cultivated at Balambangan. Further, they were to open immediately intercourse with the neighbouring islands for the supply of provisions. Cattle from Banguay, which island was reported to be abounding with it, and Borneo, where also rice could be procured, were to be imported, so as to encourage all branches of trade and cultivation at the new establishment.

§ 22 etc. To this place were to be drawn the Chinese, Bughis and other India traders by means of indulgence and lenity, and contracts should be concluded with the princes at Borneo, Mindanao and other islands for pepper, spices, etc., in exchange for opium, piece goods and other articles from Bengal. Import and export should not be subject to duties of any kind, and all those traders were to be exempted from exactions of every shape under colour of presents and fees for entry or clearance.

§ 29 is important in its kind as later on it proved to be one of the causes of mismanagement. It stated that all Europeans duly registered by Chief and Council were to enjoy unlimited freedom of traffic except in spices, pepper, raw silk, and opium.

§ 30. A Bombay cruiser was to stay there as a guardship under the command of Chief and Council, who were ordered to be most vigilant against treachery or surprise by the Malays.

§ 33. Definitely constituted the administration: A Chief with two other persons formed the Council, assisted in civil affairs by two factors and two writers, with the following appointments par annum:

Chief	£600	} to commence from their arrival at Balambangan.
Second	„400	
Third	„300	
Factors	„150 each	
Writers	„100 each	

The persons to be vested with these offices were: John Herbert, Chief; Michael Tierney, Second and Herbert's successor in case of accident; Alcock, Third; James Beck of the Bombay Marine, senior factor; Robert Kirkham at Fort St. George, second factor; James Vivares, formerly under Captain Trotter at Balambangan, first writer; Vicentio Corbet, second writer.

Captain James Swithin was to have the command of all the vessels at and employed by the new Chiefship, with seat and voice as youngest in Council on all marine affairs.

§ 45 etc. The force to be sent from Bombay or Madras on the »Britannia« was to amount to 60 seamen and 40 lascars, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 2 sergeants, 2 corporals, 20 European soldiers, 20 sepoy and 1 engineer, while artisans were sent from Europe.

Concerning the civil service, secretary, accountant, paymaster, and other officers were to be appointed at Balambangan according to the method adopted at the Presidencies; copies of a regular Diary and Consultation Book with a set of General Books of Accounts should be sent yearly to the Court; lists of the employed civil and military persons should be delivered from time to time with registers of deaths, burials and all casualties with their dates.

Discussions of matters for the general management of the Company's affairs at Balambangan or of disputes with other European powers, and matters relating to trade and internal regulations were left to the decision of Chief and Council.

By the last paragraphs these were requested to examine the west coast of Palawan for the security of the navigation to and from China, and to try to embody the Bughis for the Company's service.

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With such detailed instructions, and vested with powers almost equal to those the two privileged Presidencies enjoyed, one would think it should have been easy to manage the new undertaking so as to bring forth at least in one year some palpable results. But John Herbert did not find speed to be urgent, and for different reasons took 2½ years to reach Balambangan, instead of eight months.

§ 2.

Preparations made at Bombay and Madras to secure Balambangan to the Company before the arrival of the Britannia.

We have seen that early in November 1768 orders were sent to the Presidents and Councils at Bombay, Bengal and Madras to take possession of Balambangan in the name of the King of Great Britain and of the East India Company. The President and Council at Bombay immediately on receipt of the dispatch sent on 30 July 1769 two cruisers, the »Success« and the »Viper«, and a schooner, the »Tiger«, under the command of the Captains Hall, Trotter and Beck to perform the said service.

Captain Hall, who found the inhabitants civil and friendly on his arrival at Banguay, took possession of it and of Balambangan, Palawan and North Borneo in the name of the King in virtue of the grant given to the Company in 1764. He stipulated that no other nation should be allowed »to land, settle or distribute the said lands without the permission of the King of Great Britain«.¹⁾ Accordingly he hoisted the English flag on 25 October 1769. But a few days later he left Balambangan for Malacca, having been obliged, through stress of weather in the passage thither, to throw overboard part of his provisions; and Captain Trotter's promise that he soon would be provided from Sulu could not be greatly relied upon.

This Captain Trotter had been ordered to proceed directly to Sulu in the »Success«²⁾ to renew the old friendship with the Sultan and if possible to get a new grant from him. In this also the servants of Bombay were successful. The Sultan afforded Trotter a very friendly reception, and readily renewed the grant of 1764 for the possession of the islands and lands specified therein. He was somewhat more reluctant to grant an exclusive right of trade throughout all his dominions and for the pearl-fishery in those seas for ever. Only the »extreme« desire that an English settlement might be effected in his kingdom as soon as possible persuaded him to make such great concessions.³⁾

It may be appropriate to notice here that the sovereign of Sulu at that time was the former crown-prince, Israel, in whom Dalrymple had had such boundless confidence as to vest him with the power of

¹⁾ Bombay Publ. Proc., 28 Dec. 1769.

²⁾ Letters from Bombay, 26 Feb. 1770.

³⁾ Ditto, 6 April 1770.

Governor of the ceded districts on the Company's behalf. His father, Alimud Din, was still Sultan in name until 1773, but so weakened by age and years of suffering that, had not his son at least upheld some authority in the districts surrounding their residence, endless rebellions of the Datus would have ruined the whole empire. Israel, the cunning fox, however, had turned their adventurous spirit into a less dangerous channel. Encouraged by him, they re-opened the long forgotten cruises against Spanish and native merchant-men. Their piratical instincts kindled again, and in hundreds of prows they infested the shores of the Philippines, and in 1769 dared invade even the Bay of Manila.

Is it then astonishing that the old Sultan embraced the friendship of the English and that he granted them whatever they desired in order to keep them and their protection near him?

Yet here, as at Balambangan, the »Success« had to leave for want of provisions. She sailed to Batavia, where Trotter hoped to refit her, and whence he proposed returning to Balambangan as soon as the winds would permit.

The only ship left here was the »Tiger«, Captain Beck, but short of provisions, and if not soon supplied also she would have had to give up her post.

Again, a promising beginning ended in disappointing failure. No news reached either Bombay or the other settlements from Balambangan or from Captain Trotter. The wildest rumours about their fate plunged the people at Bombay into deepest despair. By a ship from Batavia it was reported that Trotter in the »Success« had been there for supplies, and that he had sailed thence to Cheribon, since which time nothing had been heard of him. On the other hand, the same ship of Batavia brought intelligence that six Dutch vessels, lately arrived from Europe, had left that port for the East, possibly with a view of obstructing the English in settling at Balambangan.

To take precautions for maintaining the establishment, and to send supplies of provisions and stores thither, the President and Council of Bombay freighted a small vessel, the »Swift«, manned her with officers and soldiers, and ordered the commander, in the absence of the »Success«, to remain at Balambangan. At the same time, Sir John Lindsay was informed of their apprehensions, and was desired to take the necessary measures for supporting the Company's undertaking and for protecting it against the Dutch armament.¹⁾ In reply he promised them every

¹⁾ Bombay Publ. Proc. 9, 19 June, 3 July 1770; Letters from Bombay, 25 July 1770.

assistance, though he had no fears for the safety of the »Success«, and although the news of the expected destination of the Dutch fleet appeared to him too vague to merit active steps against it. Besides, he recommended that the Company should abstain from settling on Palawan, that island belonging to the Spaniards, although it was included in the grant of 1764.¹⁾

As late as December 1770, viz. six months after the dispatch of the »Swift«, which had touched at Fort St. George, those at Bombay were without any news from Balambangan, and the privileges they in the meanwhile had received from the Sultan of Pasir²⁾ to trade there were followed by as little result as all the previous grants.

About five months later, considering the extremely unfavourable state of the Balambangan settlement, the Government at Bengal despatched a schooner thither with a cargo to open a trade³⁾, which however appears to have been sticking fast at the very beginning.

No further references could be found giving any idea of this infant settlement, of its trade, extent, and growth. Most likely there were neither storehouses nor factory, else it would have been mentioned by Herbert when he received the place under his charge. Some small trade was carried on at Sulu between the schooner and the shore, while most time was spent in cruising among the numerous islands, to watch foreign vessels and to take soundings.

After all, the orders sent to the East in November 1768 had merely been that the Company's servants should take possession of the territories which had been granted to them. Subsequent dispatches had only directed them to co-operate with Lord Lindsay and to obey his instructions, and when in the autumn of 1769 it was resolved to postpone the expedition from London to Balambangan, Madras and Bombay had to maintain that place by stationing there one cruiser, which was to be relieved annually.⁴⁾ It was not till late in 1770 that Bengal and Madras received orders to despatch one schooner each with a suitable cargo to Balambangan by the end of March 1771 at the latest, so that they might be there well provided when the agents arrived, which the Directors expected might be early in 1772.

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¹⁾ Letters from Bombay, 25 July 1770, 3 Dec. 1770; Bombay Pub. Proc. 24 June 1770.

²⁾ Ditto, 3 July 1770

³⁾ Letters from Bengal, 2 April 1771.

⁴⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 10 November 1769.

The beginning of the »Britannia's« voyage, like so many earlier attempts, promised good results. On the 6th October she left the Cape of Good Hope, after having taken on board sheep, plants and seeds of all kinds. On 12th December she arrived at Anjengo, and at ten o'clock on the 7 January 1772 Captain Swithin delivered his instructions and dispatches to President and Council at Bombay, who had already made the first preparations after having received copies of them overland by Bussora.¹⁾

§ 3.

The Formation of the Balambangan Settlement by John Herbert.

As the voyage of the »Britannia« had no further influence on the fate of the Balambangan settlement, only a few words may be said on the motives which caused the astonishingly long delays.

For more than three months she was kept at Bombay to be furnished with sheep and stores and equipped with artificers and forty caffres, half men half women.²⁾

On the 26th May her arrival at Fort St. George was reported. Here the long series of accidents began. In pursuance of the orders of 12 June 1771 the necessary equipment was collected and the sum of £5,000 delivered on board. The number of the factors and writers was stated to be complete when they left Bombay, where Sterne had been appointed first factor instead of Beck. The officers, non-commissioned officers, sepoy and lascars³⁾ were embarked late in May and Bengal, where the »Britannia« was to touch at, had been advised to furnish 350 chests of opium for the Balambangan market.⁴⁾

There were but two men missing: the Chief Herbert⁵⁾ and the Second in Council, Tierney.

The future Chief Herbert, when the information of his appointment arrived at Fort Marlborough from Madras, happened to be on a holiday-

¹⁾ Bombay Publ. Proc., 2 & 7 January 1772.

²⁾ Ditto, 27 March 1772.

³⁾ Lascar is the name commonly used for all oriental soldiers. In Ceylon the use of the word lascareen for a local or civil soldier even now exists.

⁴⁾ Madras Publ. Consult., 29 May 1772.

⁵⁾ The author's original intention of giving an ample biography of J. Herbert & to clear up once for ever the strange history of A. Will. Devis' portrait of Governor Herbert [at present again exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery] has been given up the subject being unworthy the task.

tour on his way to Fort St. George to recover his health. But as it was his maxim that speed was unimportant, he prolonged that short voyage by following an irregular course as far as Acheen, so that the »Britannia« had to wait until the month of August when he pleased to arrive at his health resort.

He came just in time to prevent the ship from departing without him, for President and Council, impatient at his delay, had decided to despatch the »Britannia« on 15th August in charge of Alcock, Third in Council for Balambangan, in case the Chief and Tierney, Second in Council, should not arrive till then.¹⁾ Under that date Herbert received his final instructions and orders, after having been richly provided with stores and money. But he still lingered till September 15th, when he sailed for Fort Marlborough, notwithstanding what he had written to Tierney on 4th August. By that letter he had informed him that he thought the ship in time to get through the Strait of Malacca and that nothing would induce him to direct the Commander of the »Britannia« to proceed to Fort Marlborough and thence by the Straits of Sunda because, Balambangan being situated at the north extremity of Borneo, and the winds on the east and south-east side of Borneo blowing with great violence from the north-east till the month of April, they would get no further than Pasir during the north-west monsoon, and would be obliged to remain there some months.²⁾

An obvious proof of the lack of responsibility which Herbert felt! Though all depended on speed, he chose the route which, as he was fully aware from the outset, inevitably caused a long delay.

In a letter to the Court³⁾ he excused his long stay at Fort St. George on the ground of his bad health, which, having developed into a lingering illness »besides the season being so far advanced« made him also resolve to call in at Fort Marlborough, where he intended to take Tierney on board. He pretended that he urgently needed him to join the expedition.

¹⁾ Madras Publ. Cons., 9, 10, 11, 22 June 1772.

²⁾ These statements, though held as unclear as possible, correspond with those of Horsburgh: »The best time to sail from Bombay for China by the Outer Passage (that is on the East Side of Luconia) is near the end of September, or beginning of October, to be sure of getting through the Strait of Macassar before the Northerly Winds and strong Southerly Currents begin, which generally is about the beginning or middle of January, sometimes the end of January, and continuous to the beginning of March.« (Horsburgh, J., *Observations on the Navigation of the Eastern Seas*, p. 1, published by A. Dalrymple, London 1797 foll.)

³⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, 10 Sept. 1772.

as the other servants were inadequate, having never had the least experience of transactions with Malays.

As to these excuses, Wedderburne and Waldare¹⁾ held that they did not correspond with the facts for, had Herbert really been prevented by illness from starting, Governor and Council at Fort St. George certainly would have mentioned it in their letters. They further thought that Herbert's going to Fort Marlborough could not be for the purpose of taking Tierney on board, as on the 4th August he had directed him to make his way to Balambangan! In their opinion it was too probable »that he was influenced in it by motives of private interest«²⁾

These were not promising auspices, and still less encouraging was Herbert's proposal to give up Balambangan which, he stated, was badly watered and without any fruit-trees and inhabitants. Instead, he proposed Pulo Bitang should be made an emporium of commerce.

The next bad news was posted at Fort Marlborough³⁾ by the triumvirate, Herbert, Tierney and Alcock. They advised the Court that the specimens of manufactures received were ill adapted to the eastern markets, and that they had been compelled to draw certificates on the Court amounting to £6067.3.1.⁴⁾ This unwelcome information was a little alleviated by Herbert's assurances, in a secret letter of the same date, that the profits on opium would defray all the expense of the settlement, while a moderate profit might be expected on piece goods, whereas the spice trade could not be relied upon.⁵⁾

This information was considered worth communicating to the Directors, although it was nothing in comparison with what had happened

¹⁾ Wedderburne and Waldare had been appointed in 1779 to prepare a Case on the Company's behalf concerning Herbert's management of the Company's affairs at Balambangan and the bad consequences for the Company arisen therefrom.

²⁾ Fact, Rec. Borneo, 12 May 1779. (In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, in future this Case will be referred to under »Case 1779«.)

³⁾ Letters from Bengal, 25 November 1772.

⁴⁾ Under the same date they also requested Fort St. George to send goods for Balambangan to the value of some thous and pounds; but President and Council, finding the event of the expedition still doubtful, wisely resolved not to comply with this request. (Madras Publ. Proc., 30 April and 20 May 1773.)

⁵⁾ Chief and Council of Balambangan never stated for what purposes these bills were drawn. A Mr. Holmes who went out as purser of the »Britannia«, being examined by the Directors later, confessed that they took in provisions only about the value of 500 dollars. Wedderburn and Waldare therefore concluded that this sum had been employed by Herbert to discharge his debts or to purchase goods which he carried from home on his private trade account [Case 1779].

clandestinely among this worthy trio, and which concerned the Court at least as much as that confided to them.

In fact the long delay at Fort Marlborough was caused by Herbert's expecting one of his ships from Europe. The reason for that measure was, according to Herbert, that the »Britannia« had been insufficiently furnished with supplies at Bombay. Therefore, »finding our wants extremely urgent particularly of arrack . . . and considering the circumstances and the heavy charge that must attend the taking up of freighted vessels . . . we esteemed it more eligible to purchase a vessel expected to arrive in January belonging to Mr. Herbert of 300 tons burthen«. ¹⁾

Accordingly Tierney, whom Herbert formerly had so much wanted to have on board for the expedition, was left at Bencoolen with orders to purchase the »Endeavour« on the Company's behalf »if he found the vessel offered by Mr. Herbert answered the purpose«, and to draw upon the Company for the amount and for the stores he should purchase. What the price of this ship was, sold by Herbert as a private merchant and bought by him as a Company's servant on the Company's behalf, could not interest the Directors, who a few months later were honoured with a new set of bills drawn upon them amounting to nearly £13,000. ²⁾

Chief and Council hoped to dispel the bad effect this news might have on the Court of Directors by informing them that the Dutch had been expelled from Bandjermasin, that the Javanese and Bally people were rebellious, and that those natives were likely to fly to Balambangan for English protection, and that they therefore had requested Bombay to despatch a vessel of force, that they might profit by this occasion at the new settlement.

On January 3rd 1773, the »Britannia« set sail for the Straits of Sunda and made another unexplained stay for some weeks at North Island. Now, had they sailed direct from Fort Marlborough to Balambangan they would have arrived there in a few weeks. But why did Herbert not choose the short track, instead of staying in the Straits of Sunda and wasting time in order to get wood and water on board? According to Holmes' confession they waited there for the »Devonshire« and for ships from China to get further necessities for Balambangan.

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter of Chief and Council for Balambangan, 26 December 1772.

²⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter from Herbert and Alcock from Pasir Road, 10 May 1773.

At last, on 12 March 1773, the »Britannia«, in company with the »Devonshire«, cast anchor off Pasir, though all the other members of the expedition disapproved of going thither.

During the several months' stay, a factory for the pepper trade was opened, but neither Diary nor Consultation Book was kept. All transactions were carried on in utmost secrecy. Only a few short notices taken from the »Britannia« Journal and the small number of letters the Directors and Bombay were honoured with inform us that among the crew and the militia, officers and soldiers, great dissatisfaction had arisen through Herbert's illiberal behaviour during the passage. The Commander of the troops, Lieutenant Brown, consequently was put under arrest to be sent back to Fort St. George for trial »for behaving with contempt and disrespect to the Chief, for using reproachful and provoking speeches and gestures and for disobedience of orders«. ¹⁾

Another proof of Herbert's unpopularity is the fact that at Batavia already seven men had deserted from the »Britannia« and that her crew was so weakened by deserters that a new one had to be supplied. ²⁾ On 10th May following, Chief and Council wrote to the President at Bombay ³⁾ that they had chosen Pasir for a temporary factory because they still had their doubts concerning the advantages of Balambangan and because, by coming south of Borneo in the low latitudes, the mildness of the climate near the equinoctials and the convenience of these regions as a starting point for the trade of the country had been too inviting not to try an establishment. Another reason that induced them to disembark at Pasir was, as they noted in the same letter, to anticipate and obviate by those measures any scheme of the Dutch there.

The Directors were advised on the same day, with the same fiction, and with a set of bills of exchange »for sundry purchases« to the amount of £12,945.6.6. The nature of these »sundry purchases«, or in what manner the value was deposited, is still unknown!

But what we know now is that the factory had been established by Herbert simply for carrying on an immense private trade. On examination in 1779 it was discovered that on arrival at Pasir Herbert had published a placard prohibiting everybody from selling goods they

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, 27 and 30 Oct., 6 Dec. 1772, 26 Jan., 27 Febr., 6, 8, 17, 18, 20 March 1773.

²⁾ Madras Publ. Proc., 25 June 1773.

³⁾ Bombay Publ. Cons., 2 February 1774.

had taken out for private trade until he should have sold his own.¹⁾ After that they were permitted to trade, but before they could do much on their own account, he purchased all the private trade from them for the use of the Company, granting them a profit of 25 to 27 per cent. For this amount he issued bills upon the Company.

In the Directors' opinion Herbert and Council were not authorised to purchase goods on the Company's behalf until those sent from London and the Presidencies had been disposed of, and in any case not before their arrival at Balambangan. Their irritation, however, still grew when Holmes upon examination declared that the Chief and Council had sold those goods to the Company, not being able to sell them by private trade.²⁾

But not content with that, Herbert, Swithin and Kirkham — Tierney had died early in January at Fort Marlborough — later on sold the Company's piece-goods on board the »Britannia« to themselves at 27½ per cent advance and twelve months' credit, or net at 17½ per cent profit. In other words, they had found it proper to allow themselves 27 per cent, while the Company had to be content with 17½ per cent!

Still worse things followed these obscure proceedings of Herbert when he omitted to enter in his Journal three drafts to the amount of more than 11,000 pounds, although in a letter he had informed the Court that the value of the said drafts had been deposited by him and Fawsitt, his private secretary. This was the more surprising as only two months later, on closing his cash-accounts, he stated a balance in his favour of 17,647 dollars, and in his cash-accounts he debited himself with only £1,672 for drafts upon the Company, without correcting the error or mentioning any omission!

We can fully understand that the Directors strictly forbade any other bill of exchange or certificate for money being granted to him,³⁾ and that they could not find suitable words to express their mortification at such — to say the least — arrogant and unqualified behaviour. In general, they entirely disapproved of the attempt at Pasir, because disagreeable consequences might be expected. If they could believe the books and letters presented to them, opium and other goods had been sold there for 27,635 dollars, and the returns made amounted to only 10,407 dollars, while the outstanding debts and charges incurred were estimated at 10,291 dollars.

¹⁾ Case 1779.

²⁾ Ditto.

³⁾ Home Misc. 771, Examiner's Office; Statement 1774. In order to avoid lengthy repetitions, this reference hereafter will be quoted under »Statement 1774«.

Nevertheless, when in June 1773 the »Britannia« sailed for Sulu,¹⁾ Herbert left at Pasir two servants, whom he had carried from Fort Marlborough, to continue the factory and the trade. Later on, from Balambangan, the Chief and Council tried to improve the trade at Pasir by settling a treaty with the Sultan and the King of the Bughis at Celebes. Disturbances among the natives, however, prevented them from taking further steps, though they hoped that the Agent would be able to keep the place.²⁾

On 16 July 1773 the »Britannia« arrived at Sulu, apparently received in a friendly way by Sultan Israel, who by a revolution had placed himself on the throne.³⁾

Instead of making straight for Balambangan, they decided again to open their field of enterprise here. Always in want of stores, provision, money, etc., they intended to wait here for ships coming from China, spending four months in taking in timber for Balambangan, which they might have accomplished in four weeks. Later on, Herbert excused the brig's stay there by alleging that otherwise most likely the Dutch would have interfered and excluded them trading there; but the Directors found these reasons to be »such an insult to common sense as cannot but excite our indignation.«⁴⁾

The decisive reasons here also were indeed of quite a private character, although Herbert & Co. understood exceedingly well how to give a cloak of virtue to their unsavoury dealings.

§ 45 of the instructions, issued 12 June 1771, directed that the marine force of the expedition in the Port of Balambangan should consist of the »Britannia« and a smaller vessel to be carried on her board. But the Chief and Council, always »sensible that the extension of the Company's commercial views and credit were better accomplished by a naval force than any other, they had from the first held it as leading principle and that it would become them to purchase a very good and useful vessel«,⁵⁾ put this advantageous reasoning into practice and bought the »Devonshire« from Herbert, and now were going to purchase a 150 tons snow, the »Dolphin«, from Alcock for 16,000 rupees.

¹⁾ Madras Publ. Cons., 10 December 1773.

²⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Balambangan Consult., 5 Feb. 1774.

³⁾ According to information from Bengal, he had however shown jealousy of so near an English establishment as that of Balambangan as soon as his reign began. (Letters from Bengal 1 March 1773.)

⁴⁾ Statement 1774.

⁵⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, letter from Herbert, Alcock and Kirkham, 8 Sept., 1773.

The Directors concluded that the real reasons for purchasing the »Devonshire« from Herbert had been that he desired to close his commercial career by the sale of his ship. Their indignation was still greater at the presumption of the Chief and Council in issuing bills on the Company for the purchase money of both ships. They expressly ordered that the »Devonshire« be immediately returned to Herbert, and that he should pay the purchase money, 30,000 rupees,¹⁾ into the Company's treasury. In case Alcock should refuse to re-accept the »Dolphin« at the price at which he had sold her to the Company, she should be tendered to Herbert on those terms, who was to return also the sum of 16,000 rupees into the treasury.²⁾

Again, pointing out the inadequacy of the outfitting of the expedition, Chief and Council once more took the liberty of honouring the Court with a list of certificates drawn upon the Company, amounting to £ 12,303.10.0.³⁾

Then trade began to be carried on as it had been some months before at Pasir. Contrary to the orders of 12 June 1771, that the »Britannia« should be used as a floating factory, Herbert & Co. sold all the Company's iron and piece goods on board and the goods of the »Carlisle« to themselves at $27\frac{1}{2}$ per cent profit and twelve months' credit, supposing that owing to indents drawn on Bombay, Bengal and Madras vast quantities of stores would be sent to Balambangan within a few months. Those goods were then sold to the Sulus by private trade on long credit, who certainly would never pay, just as they did in 1762.

Herbert apologised for this proceeding by pretending that owing to the protracted voyage they feared to find too many goods at Balambangan, sent thither by the Presidencies!⁴⁾

It was characteristic of Herbert that he requested the Company's servants at Bengal, who had already sent two ships — the »Syren« and the »Phoenix« — to Balambangan with cargoes up to the value of 228,535 rupees, that they should secure a monopoly of the whole opium of the country for the use of his new establishment, to the exclusion of foreign companies. This they rightly refused.⁵⁾

At Sulu much time was wasted with a sort of trial against Andrew

¹⁾ 218 rupees = 100 Spanish dollars; 1 Spanish dollar = 5/6.

²⁾ Statement 1774.

³⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter from Herbert etc., 8 Sept., 1773.

⁴⁾ Ditto, Sulu Consult., 30 December 1773.

⁵⁾ Letters from Bengal, 10 November 1773.

Murray, whom Herbert had engaged at Fort St. George as a surgeon, but dismissed at Pasir.¹⁾

It is not my intention to give a long description of the tedious proceeding; just a few pictures may serve to give some idea of a judge of Governor Herbert's kind. On 19 September 1773 Alcock, the judge's bosom friend, and Murray, were met by Ensign Garden in a narrow lane of Sulu quarrelling and with swords drawn. Alcock, at Garden's request, at once swore to keep peace with Murray, and was dismissed, while an order, written by Herbert, directed Captain Swithin to receive on board Andrew Murray as a prisoner. The latter protested against such an illegal order, as in his opinion he had ceased to be under the Chief's orders since 13th May. Captain Swithin supported this protest by declaring that the laws of Great Britain did not permit such an insult, and that he would not have anything to do with Murray's imprisonment.

A Board, convened in all speed by Herbert, summoned Swithin and asked him if he continued to insist »in throwing in they way every obstacle he can to prejudice the expedition«, in despising the Board's orders, etc.? Further, he was requested to declare if he would abide by what he had written. As he affirmed it, they reminded him of several Acts of Parliament in force to protect the trade in the Indies, which ordered that no unlicensed persons should be allowed to remain in India provided that they were to the prejudice of the Company's interests, and that its representatives were judges and agents to act in conformity, and that inferior persons were to obey them and not to act contrary to their directions.

Swithin replied that he indeed had heard of such Acts of Parliament, but that he knew of no authority by which a captain had to detain any person on board his ship.

Exasperated at such a bold answer, the Board unanimously agreed to suspend him from the service of the Honourable Company.

Thus they got rid of the best man in the expedition, who, happily not much depressed by the judgement of such men, was soon restored to the service by strict orders of the Directors.

Base and despicable were then the proceedings against Murray. As he could not be prevented from leaving the »Britannia«, the Secretary, John Jesse, had to bring him on board a letter purporting to be a literal translation of a message from Sultan Israel, which re-

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, 13 May 1773.

requested Murray no longer to stay on shore in the Sultan's dominions as, owing to engagements of the Sulus with the Company, he might be assured that something disagreeable might happen to him at the hands of the natives.

When Murray afterwards consulted the Sultan, the latter positively denied having written those threats in the original Malay, but that they must have been added in the translation without his authority!

With bitter vigour, the surgeon protested against such unfair dealing, and accused Herbert of having illegally robbed, seized and imprisoned him, a British subject. He made him answerable for this as well as for all losses, damages und expenses he had sustained by it; and he asked for a free passage on the »Dolphin« to return to Europe.

The Board however came to the resolution to refuse Murray a passage to Europe, and to detain him at Sulu!

A similar fate was shared by Lieutenant Brown, a beloved, diligent and honest soldier. He had been put under arrest at Pasir ¹⁾ in order to be sent back to Madras. Undoubtedly it was not without some obscure reason that Herbert & Co. changed their mind and that they decided to send him to Europe to take his trial, and not to Madras, which would have been the regular course, as he belonged to the army of the Coast. ²⁾

Such continuous dissensions among the English could not fail to render them unpopular and ridiculous with the natives, and can we be astonished that these seized every opportunity to begin hostilities with them?

One day a dispute arose between the Sulus and some Bughis employed by the Company. The whole town was alarmed. At once whole bands of well-armed natives rushed to the place of the quarrel. Bullets whizzed through the air and lances flashed in the bright sunshine. A bloody battle was going to develop into unexpected dimensions when Herbert and Alcock finally succeeded in securing a truce by giving a handsome present to the Sulu general's nephew, who had been slightly hurt. ³⁾

What malicious joy the two Dutch ambassadors from Ternate must have felt when they came just in the nick of time to witness these disturbances! Very likely it was no invention when they informed the almighty Herbert that they had come on the invitation of the Sulus.

¹⁾ See page 81.

²⁾ Madras Military Constlt., 4 February 1774; Letters from Madras, 6 February 1774.

³⁾ Forrest: A Voyage to New Guinea, p. 332. Forrest Thomas: A Voyage to New Guinea and the Moluccas from Balambangan London 1779.

In fact, I would rather believe them than Herbert's report that a month later they departed in disgust.¹⁾

Of all these small, yet important, circumstances, the Directors were not informed until many years later, for just that part of the Diary which contained all that was worthy of record had been destroyed »by an accident«, as Herbert reported in a separate letter.²⁾ This information, however, the Court found to be a new imposture, and expressly asked him once more to send the Diary which he had pretended to have lost, as they were convinced that they would find in it all about the disputes and quarrels which had caused so many alterations and suspensions before the expedition could reach Balambangan.³⁾

Before accompanying the »Britannia« thither it may not be uninteresting to make an analytical table of all the expenses the Company had sustained for this curious undertaking before it reached the long-looked-for island.

The following Table has been made out of the Balambangan Journal, and is the more interesting as the Company never knew on what most of the disbursements had been spent: —

Balambangan Journal.

From the Outset from London to 6th December 1773.

A.		£
Fol. 16	To Britannia, outset & cargo from London	20,052
20	To Bombay	1,031
29	To Fort St. George	22,920
30	To Capt. Swithin	209
30	To Britannia, charges from time to time in different ports	8,409
43	To goods purchased of individuals	10,761
43	To draughts on Bengal for Carlisle cargo & charter	19,540
66	To Mr. Herbert for Devonshire grab	4,400
66	To Mr. Herbert for opium	4,134
67	To Mr. Fawsitt for sundries	682
68	To Mr. Alcock for ships & stores	2,626
68	To Fort William	28,565
76	To Mess. Tierney & Fawsitt	88
76	To Capt. Clements	1,854
Ledger 15	To Canton	11,824
15	To Bombay, draught in favour of Mr. Hunter .	15,625
15	To draught on England	34,463
		<u>£187,183</u>

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter from Chief & Council at Balambangan, 6 Jan. 1774.

²⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Separate Letter from Herbert, 6 Jan. 1774.

³⁾ Statement 1774.

B. Goods sold on credit before the arrival of the Chief and Council at Balambangan.

		£
Fol. 58	To natives at Pasir	1,454
58	To Mess. Herbert & Co.	24,427
68	To goods sent to Canton from Sulu	3,719
75	To money lent to Mess. Herbert etc.	315
78	To the Sultan	278
78	To Mr. Herbert, opium	1,540
79	To the natives of Sulu, opium	10,606
		£42,339

The Court of Directors were justified in believing all the sums »sold on credit« lost, so that the expenses and losses amounted to more than £230,000 ere the arrival at Balambangan.

As to the big debts contracted at Sulu, it was found on examination that little private trade had been carried on there, but that on the Company's behalf a great many goods had been sold at more than 100 per cent profit. Most of the goods had not been sold for credit, but for ready money. The profit, however, was put into the pockets of Herbert and his associates, while debts which they could not collect were charged to the Company's account!

§ 29 of the instructions of 12 June 1771 strictly forbade private trade in opium. Nevertheless Herbert at Sulu, and afterwards at Balambangan, used to buy that valuable article from the Company, allowing it a small profit from 5 to 17½ per cent, whereupon he sold it on his private account at double rate at least.

It is certain that Herbert, if he had taken more pains, could have filled up a ship with Sulu produce in a short time. Just when he arrived there must have been collected great stores for the two Chinese junks which came yearly in January. Wax, pearl oyster, shells, birds' nests, agal agal, oil, clove bark, black wood, rattans, sago, various barks for dyeing, cassia pepper, camphor, sandalwood, curious shells for grottos, pearls and spices were chiefly bartered by Chinese traders for cloth, linen, iron pans, plates, flowered silks, tea, cutlery, brassware, gongs, beads and fireworks.¹⁾

The sentiments of the Directors, when they gradually were apprised of the mismanagement of their affairs in the East, are expressed in the following passages: »The extraordinary and unwarrantable measures which you have adopted since we directed you to form a settlement

¹⁾ Forrest: A Voyage to New Guinea.

at Balambangan, appear so alarming to us that we sent orders to Bengal overland to check effectually and without loss of time that extravagant disposition which is manifested in your whole conduct and to put a total stop to the dangerous experiment you were making for carrying on the new trade there. . . . We must notice in general the utter impropriety of your incurring a profusion of expenses and entering into such extensive plans of commerce in an infant settlement. . . , we positively enquire you to confine your expenses in future to the line prescribed by our orders of 12 June 1771.*¹⁾

Such was the mild censure of the Directors. However, it came too late to have any further influence on the fate of the new establishment.

Early in December Coles was appointed Agent at Sulu to be left there. With him remained the dismissed Brown and Schopp who had tendered their services to the Sultan.

The »*Britannia*« set sail for Balambangan, where she cast anchor on the 12th December 1773, exactly two and a half years after she had left London. In company with her sailed the »*Success*« with provisions from Madras and Bombay, and the »*Devonshire*« laden with treasure and stores from Canton. The »*Dolphin*« and the »*Carlisle*« had arrived at the island two days before.

In what state they found Balambangan is nowhere mentioned, except that they judged the north harbour to be excellent and the soil fertile. A somewhat fresh impulse seems to have animated the Chief and Council here for the first time. The »*Dolphin*« was despatched to the adjacent islands for provisions. Lieutenant Barton received orders to survey the west coast of Palawan. To the King of Mandahore, who had desired the friendship of the English, they sent a letter testifying their intention to trade with him. Steps were taken at Mindanao to recover Coles's ship, that had been seized by Mindanao pirates. It was resolved to give up the Pasir trade until the government there was more settled. Bambay was requested to send two gallivats²⁾ instead of a cruiser, which Herbert sent back, small vessels being more practicable and necessary for the trade in those quarters.

Everything was done in a few weeks to make Balambangan an emporium of the eastern trade. Finding the fleet still inadequate and being disappointed, as they pretended, in a supply from Bombay — the

¹⁾ Statement 1774.

²⁾ The word gallivat or gallevat comes from the Galeote of the Portuguese and means a kind of inferior galley with only one bank of oars.

opium sent being rotten and adulterated — and in order to avoid heavy expenses by freighting country vessels, the Chief and Council made a contract with one John Hunter, a private merchant of Bombay.

On 6 January 1774¹⁾ they copiously detailed the reasons which had induced them to enter into a public agreement on the Company's behalf and into a private one with this private merchant.²⁾

By the public agreement Hunter had to deliver to them in the port of Balambangan a quantity of Surat goods amounting to 250,000 rupees, which the Presidencies, especially Bombay, were reproached with not being able to procure. On the delivery of these goods the Chief and Council were to pay him the sum which the invoice amounted to, plus 55 per cent for freight etc. in bills drawn upon the Company. As part of payment they gave Hunter at once 132,000 rupees³⁾ by bills drawn on Governor and Council at Bombay and the Court in London. Finally it was agreed that whichever party failed should pay to the other 100,000 rupees.⁴⁾

To get an idea of the enormity of this agreement it is best to refer to the examiners⁵⁾ who had to give their judgment upon it.

At Pasir and at Sulu it had been Herbert's maxim that the premium allowed to the Company upon their piece goods sold at one year's credit should not exceed $27\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Now, only one month later he allowed Hunter to enjoy a commission of 55 per cent on the invoice, not at one year's credit, but with an advance payment to him of nearly £18,000! Besides that this contract was contrary to the orders of 12 June 1771, by which Balambangan was to be provided with stores exclusively from the Presidencies, the Directors found that these proceedings with Hunter exhibit a scene of irregularity, duplicity and presumption not to be equalled upon the records of the Company!⁶⁾

Was it not absurdly illogical to stipulate in the 4th article that the goods should be paid for by bills drawn upon the Company, whereas by the 6th the Chief and Council engaged to give as part of payment one bill drawn upon Governor and Council of Bombay and another on the Court of Directors?

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo.

²⁾ In the opinion of the Directors every assertion in this letter was destitute of truth and calculated only to impose upon their servants at Bombay. (Statement 1774.)

³⁾ In another copy, 141,000 rupees.

⁴⁾ Home Misc. 771. Articles of Agreement made with John Hunter, 30 Dec. 1773.

⁵⁾ Case 1779.

⁶⁾ Statement 1774.

As the agreement had been signed not only by Chief Herbert and the members of Council, Alcock and Kirkham, but also by Coles, Palmer and John Jesse, the secretary (persons who had no permission whatever from the Court to reside at Balambangan and whom they had ordered to be restored to their former respective stations¹⁾) it was justly considered as a private contract and not binding on the Company. And some of the interested persons, on examination in 1779, admitted indeed that it had been intended for their private account.

The drawing of an enormous bill upon Bombay was, to say the least, insolent, as it was well-known that the Company and the Presidencies had contracted enormous debts within the last ten years.²⁾ This proceeding was rendered still worse by the lies the Chief and Council invented to make Bombay pay. They represented that it was impossible to receive raw silk and spices for barter in the first year, and that they badly needed a sum of 135,056 rupees for the purchase of those articles, and in the same letter they requested Bombay to procure for them broadcloths and other goods to the value of 150,000 rupees, for the transport of which to Balambangan they had agreed with Hunter.³⁾

The Court of Directors branded the duplicity of such behaviour with the appropriate observation that it could not be sufficiently condemned and that in fact it was obtaining money under false pretences. They decided not to accept the draft of 8,000 dollars, and ordered the Governor and Council at Bombay to act in a similar manner.⁴⁾ But here unfortunately the Secretary had been directed to accept the said bills before the dispatch from London could arrive.

The second agreement of the same date with John Hunter engaged him to bring into the port of Balambangan a good 500 tons ship in order to carry merchandise to Europe, for which the Company would pay freight, on delivery in the Thames, at the rate of £21.13.4 per ton, a sum which Herbert stated to be two-thirds of what was paid to the Company's charter party ships from Europe. The same freight would be paid for a cargo of 500 tons from London back to Balambangan. The ship was to be laden within one month; if not, the

¹⁾ Letters to Fort Marlborough, 10 Dec. 1773; Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter to Balambangan, 19. Nov. 1773.

²⁾ In 1772 the Bengal debts amounted to £1,039,000, and the Company's debts to £6,000,000. (Zimmermann, *Die europäischen Kolonien*, Bd. 2, p. 441.)

³⁾ Bombay Publ. Proc., 27, and 29 March 1774.

⁴⁾ Statement 1774.

Company were to pay 6,000 rupees per month to Hunter as demurrage. Both parties agreed to be bound in the sum of £12,000, in case one of them should not fulfil the engagement. Should, however, Herbert & Co., by accident and misfortune, be prevented from loading the ship, the contract was to be null and void. Instead, the Company should be compelled to purchase the said ship »on reasonable terms« or, if they could not agree with Hunter concerning the price, the same ship was to be freighted by the Company at the rate of 6,000 rupees per month.¹⁾

There is no doubt that the Directors did not feel flattered at being spoken of as if they where under their servants' orders. They thought it a transaction so presumptuous, indiscreet and unauthorised that they sent orders²⁾ to dissolve the contract. They strictly forbade the purchase of the ship or the sending of her to Europe. If the Chief an Council had already freighted the vessel, the Court directed, in order to avoid heavy losses, that she should be dispatched with goods from Balambangan to Fort St. George, where she was to be dismissed.

With these unedifying and unpromising preliminaries the Chief and Council inaugurated their new sphere of action.

§ 4.

The Chiefship of Balambangan and its Dependency at Borneo Proper.

Nearly all the books and journals being burned with the establishment itself, it is extremely difficult to give an accurate description of life and trade at Balambangan.

About the situation and size of the Settlement there would be no information at all, had not chance preserved a wonderful sketch and plan of it among Dalrymple's Charts in the India Office.

From that sketch it appears that, whatever may be said against Herbert's character, neither he nor his crew can be reproached with idleness. Building quite a village, with harbour and stockades, in the course of one year, required a man of rare energy and ability; and it is a great pity that his powers were not concentrated on his duty, but led astray on operations which inevitably resulted in moral ruin and crime.

The north part of the island of Balambangan is deeply cut by a wide oval beach, into which the Malayan prows sailed or rowed, from

¹⁾ Home Misc. 771, Second Agreement with John Hunter, 30 Dec. 1773.

²⁾ Dispatches to Bombay, 2 September 1774.

prehistoric times to the present, for shelter in raging storms and from being crushed on dark nights against one of the many islets. Here, in the low waters which are never curled by the slightest breeze, they took refuge, but rarely went on shore, seeing it was covered with impenetrable shrubs. A few of them rowed over the quiet surface as far as the inner half of the beach, to take in fresh water from the small river that flowed in an almost imperceptible current into the blue bay.

Here on the east shore of the basin, in a softly rising peninsula, bounded on the left by a small run of fresh water, in front by the beach, and on the right by a narrow inlet, and consequently having the open beach on two sides, were built as the centre of the establishment the secretary's offices some hundred yards inland. By the chief road, running for the greater part parallel to the coast, they were connected with the Chief's house, about a mile and a half distant to the South, surrounded by a few cottages for servants. Before, however, we can reach this quarter, we have to cross by a bridge a small run of fresh water, on which were built the Company's large godowns, which were directly connected with the Bughis' houses by a narrow lane. Walking from the centre on the main road towards the Chief's house, we should have had to pass through the stockade, erected in zigzag and well mounted with nine guns. Turning the corner of this fortification to the left, and proceeding under thin fruit-trees, we should suddenly have perceived Coles's house and one of the Company's godowns in a wide and open space from which a broad road led inland to houses about one mile further back.

The stockade was erected about sixty yards inland with two fronts upon the beach. Directly under the mouths of the guns, Sulu traders and settlers had a few small warehouses where they used to pull up their prows.

Without entering the centre place within the stockade, but continuing our walk in an opposite direction, viz. to the north-east along the yellow sand of the coast, after having passed an orchard, we should have reached a set of about half-a-dozen Chinese houses surrounded by some primitive peppergardens. Right in the corner of the peninsula, almost directly built on the water, so that it was washed by it on two sides, a big mansion, the House at the Point, served as store and watch-house at the same time.

Within the stockade, an oval place of half a square mile had been cleared for the most valuable buildings. Here, protected and surrounded by the stockade and thick bushes and ferns, were the magazine, the

secretary's house, the military officers' houses, only two hundred yards behind the guns, and the sepoy barracks, still nearer to the stockade.

This place was the strong nucleus of the establishment, well fortified towards the sea and apparently safely protected by thick bushes towards the land. One would think no natives would have been able to take it by force. Certainly though, for an unwatchful garrison, just those bushes could become fatal, as they were thick indeed, but not impenetrable.

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Chief and Council were not yet established at Balambangan when alarming news came from all parts.

The ship sent to the adjacent islands for provisions returned without having procured anything.

The master of an Amoy junk whom they had encouraged to bring tea, raw silk and many Chinese settlers did not come back, although they had promised him £30 per head for their passage.¹⁾

Chinese junks, which formerly had passed the island every year in January and February, seemed to avoid the old accustomed track. The »Royal Captain«, sailing from China with orders to exchange Chinese goods at Balambangan for a cargo to be brought to Europe, struck a rock a few leagues off the settlement and was entirely lost.²⁾ Herbert therefore resolved to send a cargo of pepper to England in the »Syren«, which he had chartered from Hunter.

The Government of Bengal refused to accept more bills from the Chief and Council after it had sent them goods to the amount of more than 560,000 rupees and paid a draft for 160,000 rupees. The total figures show that this Presidency alone had expended more than one million rupees for the new establishment before Herbert arrived there, and as they had heard nothing from him since his last letter from Pasir, no one can reproach them for desisting from expending more for him.³⁾

Things at Sulu suddenly threatened to give Herbert quite an unexpected task.

Sultan Israel, the cunning fox, had never shown his real face, whether he was the friend of the English, the Spanish or the Dutch.

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter from Balambangan, 12 Feb. 1774.

²⁾ Letters from Madras, 15 March 1774,

³⁾ Letters from Bengal, 15 March 1774.

He had recognised all the grants and treaties formerly concluded with the English, and apparently was displeased when the estates refused their assent to grant them the pearl-fishery. Yet at the same time he had received in a friendly way the Dutch messengers from Ternate, had entertained them with all possible Sulu amusements, and finally had dismissed them with amiable idle promises. Then he repented, as Sultan, the crimes he had committed as Crown Prince, and would fain have conciliated the Spaniards, whom he had so severely damaged by piratical cruises. But ere he could dispatch the first messenger of peace, his suspicion was aroused by the information that more than the usual military supply had arrived at Zamboanga. Like a candle in a nest of wasps, this rumour bewildered and disconcerted the whole state of Sulu. A Council, held the same night, decided to put the capital in a state of defence. Had Hannibal in person knocked at the gates of Rome, the anxiety of the Romans would have been mere joy compared with that of the poor Sulus! Rumours were spread that the Spaniards had publicly declared they were going to pay a visit to Balambangan. At Sulu this was considered to be mere pretence, the more so as still wilder prattle reported that Spain had made over to the French part of the Philippines and inter *alia* the island of Sulu.¹⁾

In the beginning of the year 1774 three Spanish galleys appeared off the island of Sulu, continually sounding. A message was received from them by a Sulu soldier that on board there were 200 European soldiers under the command of a Colonel. Towards evening the armament disappeared westward. Nevertheless, the Sulus continued the work on their fortifications, and sent to Balambangan for supplies of ammunition, guns, and arms.²⁾ The procedure adopted, as in the following days, was that a Council of Datus, considering the Spanish »guilty of the highest disrespect to the State of Sulu«³⁾ because they had not notified their appearance by saluting the fort, sent a dispatch to the Colonel requesting him to excuse his strange behaviour. This was duly complied with on the part of the Spaniards, whereupon the galleys were allowed to take in water and provisions provided that they would not touch at any other island of the Sulu empire.

When in the early morning of the 8th January the Spaniards again appeared, »the drum beat to arms and every woman, from the

¹⁾ Bombay Publ. Proc., 15 June 1774 (Letter from Coles at Sulu to Balambangan 25 Dec. 1773).

²⁾ Ditto, 4 Jan. 1774.

³⁾ Ditto, 14 Jan. 1774.

sultanin down to the meanest slave were ordered to carry stones to fill up the curtain, which they joyfully did.¹⁾ The English Agent himself engaged on behalf of the Company as many Chinese coolies as he could to help the natives in fortifying the town.

The Spanish Colonel must have had a good share of jovial humour, for, when the warlike Sulus refused him permission to land again, he in reply sent a band of music on shore in order to entertain them! Hostilities at once ended when an »express« from Zamboanga brought official information that the three galleys were cruising in search of Lanun²⁾ pirates.

Although, at least in the presence of the English Agent, the Sulus retained their hostile attitude towards the Spaniards and promised not to enter into any engagement with them, it appears that the above mentioned musical intermezzo marked the beginning of a most amicable correspondence between the two royal highnesses, the Most Catholic King of Spain and the Defender of the Faith at Sulu. Only ten days later Sultan Israel sent a letter to Madrid to inform his royal brother of his great desire to establish friendly relations by a mutual agreement. By two following dispatches Carlos III. received from him the welcome news that he had refused the English permission to exchange the Balambangan settlement for an establishment on Sulu near the capital. This token of friendship, as it was pointed out, so enchanted Carlos that he directed the Captain General of the Philippines to promise his protection to the Sulus.³⁾

Of this change of mind in Sultan Israel the Chief at Balambangan was entirely unaware. Hearing of the military preparations made at Sulu, Herbert and his associates were stirred to warlike enthusiasm. A Council of War was held, who were of opinion that they would be strong enough to withstand all the Spaniards in the East, and new orders were sent to poor Bombay to furnish them with military stores.⁴⁾

¹⁾ Ibid.

²⁾ The Lanuns, though originally from Mindanao and known as the most formidable pirates, had important settlements on the north-east coast of Borneo, which in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century annually furnished a great number of prowes for piratical enterprises. They were the real pirates, the Moors or Moros as they were called in the East.

³⁾ Letter from Carlos III. to Sultan Israel, 2 Dec. 1774; Ditto to the Capt. General of the Philippines, 5 Dec. 1774. (Published by Saleeby, History of Sulu, Appendix 11.) Unfortunately the whole correspondence between these monarchs is still in the Archives of the Executive Bureau at Manila.

⁴⁾ Letters from Bombay, 14 July 1774.

Who knows that Herbert felt little contented that the Spanish withdrew from Sulu without having exhibited the least hostile intention? The fact is that, being once animated and prepared for military adventures, Chief and Council showed great inclination to proceed with a naval force in order to compel the Sultan and natives of Sulu to pay their debts.¹⁾ Fortunately they desisted from carrying out this plan, which would have accelerated their fate in an unpleasant manner. Besides, the Directors unanimously disapproved of any proceeding by force against the natives, though they had ordered their servants at Bombay to furnish Balambangan with two armed gallivats to protect the trade there against pirates.²⁾

Herbert & Co. were not idle. But, alas, whatever they did was either against the orders of 12 June 1771 or, later on, found no favour in the eyes of the Directors. Sometimes their behaviour could best be compared with that of reckless schoolboys on holiday. Freed for a time from the schoolmaster's authority, they hurry hither and thither, led and instigated by some careless fellow to commit all possible mischief, mostly without the least evil intention. Many of the undertakings of Herbert and his fellows must be regarded in this light. They honestly endeavoured to execute their orders as well as possible, only they were misled by egotism and avarice. It would indeed be unjust not to acknowledge the attempts made by them to improve and extend the Company's influence in the East.

We have already stated the overtures they had made at Pasir and Celebes. With Mindanao they came into direct contact owing to the seizure of Coles' ship by pirates of that island. In the course of subsequent discussions the Sultan there showed himself friendly, sent back the people the pirates had sold to him, and promised to return the rest of the crew and stores whenever he could secure them.³⁾ While these pourparlers continued, a small barter trade had begun with his subjects.

At the same time energetic advances were made towards opening a trade with Manila.

Although these attempts were in conformity with the orders of 12 June 1771 the Directors entirely disapproved of them, as they were well aware that the treaties existing between Great Britain and Spain prohibited such an interference in the Spanish Colonies. They there-

¹⁾ Statement 1774.

²⁾ Dispatches to Bombay, 2 September 1774.

³⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, Balambangan Consult., 5 Feb., 1774.

fore strictly directed Chief and Council that all similar ventures should be discontinued.¹⁾

Herbert sent messengers not only to the East and South, but also westwards, in order to increase the number of places for supplies. In June 1774 a letter was addressed to the King of Borneo Proper informing him of their arrival at Balambangan and of their wish to enter into an alliance with him. In reply, the King sent an ambassador to express his great desire that the English might settle in his territories. John Jesse, the Secretary at Balambangan, then appointed Deputy Agent at Borneo Proper, went thither and succeeded in concluding a treaty, from which great benefits might be expected for the Company.

After having carefully studied the reasons which might have prevailed on the Sultan to desire an English settlement in his dominions — and these proved to be chiefly protection from the piratical Sulu and Mindanao people — he consented to grant the Borneans the Company's assistance whenever they should be attacked. In return, he received on his masters' behalf the exclusive right in the pepper trade. As he found the hill-people, who were by far the most numerous, very fond of clothes, he stipulated that the English should pay in merchandize for the pepper they purchased.²⁾

As this new dependency of Balambangan proved to be the only one attended by success, and as John Jesse was the first Englishman who put foot on this part of Borneo, a few words may be said about Brunei or Borneo Proper.

The kingdom of Brunei, which to-day stretches from the 115th^o to the 116th^o E. long. extended in earlier times over the whole island of Borneo, the Sulu Archipelago and part of the Philippines. Constant wars with the Sulus and Malayan pirates in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century reduced the extension of this empire to the north and north-west territories of Borneo, viz. Sarawak, Brunei and the western districts of British North Borneo of to-day.

That the tradition of the once mighty empire is not a mere oriental fable is proved by Pigafetta³⁾, who came to this part as early as 1521. He states that the city of Brunei contained twenty-five thousand fires, i. e. families, and that town and country were distinguished by wealth.

¹⁾ Dispatches to Bombay, 2 September 1774.

²⁾ John Jesse: Account of Borneo Proper.

³⁾ The Venetian, Antonio Pigafetta, accompanied Magellan on the expedition round the world, and his account is the most authentic of the few contemporary narratives.

He gives a verbose description of the King's palace, of the luxurious meals he and his suite were presented with, which consisted of not less than »thirty or thirty-two different kinds of meat besides fish and other things«¹⁾, and of the golden and silver plate.

That even at that early time the kingdom bore the germ of destruction in it is evident from Pigafetta's short observation that the Moros had daily combats with the heathens, which were the more obstinate and cruel as there were two kings, a Moorish and a heathen, in two different towns in the same harbour. The Venetian's accuracy concerning Borneo is not to be doubted in the least, the more as he is one of the few authors who clearly pointed out that the coasts of the island of Borneo were not inhabited by the aborigines but by Malayan invaders who in the 13th century had adopted the religion of Islam. The »heathen and Moorish people« he met there in feud most likely were Muruts and Land-Dyaks fighting against the Sea-Dyaks. The description he gives of their weapons would speak for this supposition. »Their most common weapons are blowpipes with thick wooden arrows ... with harpoon points of bamboo like harpoons and which are poisoned. At the end of their blowpipes they fasten a bit of iron like a spear-head, and when they have shot their arrows they fight with that.«²⁾

Everybody who has visited the Asiatic Department in the British Museum will remember that the Dyaks still use the same weapon. That they are fond of cock-fighting, as Pigafetta noticed, may still be found in modern accounts of Borneo; on the other hand he does not mention that they were head-hunters at that time.

The government at this period of our history was similar in many ways to that of Bandjermasin and Sulu. It was vested in the Sultan and the Superior Council, formed by fifteen Pangarans who held the great offices of the state. They were appointed by the Sultan and assisted by three representatives of the plebs, the so-called Orankies or Oran Kayas. In opposition to that of Sulu the commonwealth suffered less by feudal anarchistic institutions, though here also the aristocrats tyrannised over the people.

Naturally, neither government nor subjects were bound by written laws, but customary laws were kept in the strictest sense.

Theft, according to the degree of the crime, was regularly punished with death or loss of the right hand. The punishment of strangling

¹⁾ Pigafetta: *Magellan's Voyage round the World*, p. 33. The original of the Ambrosian M. S. etc. ... by James A. Robertson Cleveland U. S. A. 1906.

²⁾ Ditto, p. 25.

for adultery was only inflicted on people of middle and inferior rank; a man of the upper class was expected to procure himself satisfaction. Capital punishment was inflicted on all murderers, except masters who had killed one of their slaves.

The Chinese enjoyed some privileges in that they were exempted from all the duties. For this, however, as at Sulu, they had to pay dearly. Constant presents had to be delivered to the head men, who in return protected the Chinese settlers against thieves. Worse off were the casual Chinese traders, who suffered heavy losses, as there were neither people nor laws to compel the native to discharge his debts. Here may be the proper place to insert a short but most important passage about the influence of the Chinese on Bornean culture.

The Chinese played here, as everywhere in Borneo, a part that cannot easily be over-estimated. What Gudgeon¹⁾ says of their influence on the present state of Borneo, namely that every store in Brunei and in the towns of Sarawak and British North Borneo is in the possession of Chinese, and that import and export are in their hands, can be applied to all ages. They were, and are still, the most industrious people, only too devoted to commerce and agriculture, so that Dyak and Malay found an easy prey in them whenever they wished. This circumstance may have delayed their immigration until late in the nineteenth century, and in former periods it has sometimes checked it entirely.

Green²⁾ thinks that in the seventh century the northeast end of Phala (Borneo) paid tribute to the Emperor of China, and that two centuries later a Chinese colony already existed in Brunei. We may suppose that in the late middle-ages a large colony of such settlers had come to Borneo under a leader called Songtiping³⁾; further, that it was received in a friendly way there by an Arab or Malayan chief, who later on married the daughter of the Chinese leader. Founded on this story, which by oral tradition had developed into more elaborate form, making Songtiping himself a Chinese emperor, the Bornean kings pretended to be the descendants of Chinese emperors.⁴⁾

Hunt⁵⁾ pretends that when 150 years later the Portuguese visited

¹⁾ Gudgeon, L. W. W., *British North Borneo*. London 1913. 4th Edition. London 1919.

²⁾ Green, E. E., *Borneo*. London 1919.

³⁾ The Sulu Annals date this event in the year 1375.

⁴⁾ According to Logan: *Journal of the Ind. Archipelago*, Vol. II.

⁵⁾ Hunt, J., *Some Particulars relative to Sulu* (in *Malayan Miscell.*, Vol. I). Bencoolen 1820—1822.

Brunei, the country was flourishing, the number of Chinese established there immense, and the trade to China very extensive. Unfortunately he does not give any authority for this statement. Had things really been so, and had there been any Chinese at Brunei, Pigafetta undoubtedly would have recorded it. But as he did not, I should incline to suppose Hunt to have written down what the natives pleased to tell him after 1810.

The Sulu Annals mention again a considerable immigration from China in 1575. When in 1600 van Noort, the first Dutchman who set foot on Borneo, intended to land and begin an intercourse with the natives, he employed a Chinaman as interpreter for this purpose.

From Borneo Proper the Chinese extended their establishments all round the island. In 1702, when the English were at Bandjermasin, four Chinese junks arrived there »each fifteen fathoms long and four broad, with porcelain ware, China silk, tea-pots, umbrellas, etc., and they took in return cargoes of pepper«. ¹⁾ Annually, ten to twelve junks carried off the pepper crops from thence, and when in 1712 the Dutch, complying with the Sultan's invitation to trade, arrived at Tatas, they were not a little disappointed to find that all the pepper had already been carried off to China.

Especially in the course of the eighteenth century, Chinese trade and immigration rapidly increased as a consequence of the change in the mercantile system the Europeans had formerly adopted.

In the sixteenth and the seventeenth century treaties had been enforced on the Malay princes which compelled the natives to sell to the Portuguese and Dutch their produce at their own rates, so that these were able to undersell the Chinese junks. It was of still greater importance that the Europeans had established ports in Borneo for themselves, and that they had compelled the Borneans to bring their produce to Batavia or Malacca for sale to China.

The consequence was that the loss of direct intercourse prevented the Chinese from further emigrating to Borneo, where they were excluded from trade by monopolies acquired by the Dutch or English. The old settlers, often in want of commerce, therefore deserted the ports and either returned to their native country or retired to the west coast of Borneo, where they founded an exclusively Chinese settlement.

When Jesse came to Borneo Proper the trade between China and that kingdom was in a flourishing state. At least seven junks came

¹⁾ Valentyne, quoted by Logan.

annually to carry to China black wood for furniture, clove bark, ratans and pepper. The Chinese settlers kept shops on board their vessels and on shore, where they had erected a small dock to build junks of their own. These, strongly made and of 600 tons burden, were dispatched to China whenever too few occasional traders came from thence. Although the coast inhabitants did their best to prevent them from directly trading with the Muruts the industrious »sons of the sun«, famous for their cleanliness, prospered, and their colony continually increased, so that forty years later Brunei was estimated to have nearly 8,000 Chinese inhabitants, viz. about half of the whole population.

* * *

Among Dalrymple's Charts, two sketches of the English factory and the town of Borneo Proper, together with the few extant descriptions, will help us to reconstruct the ancient capital.

The city lay about ten miles up the river, which could not be navigated without a native guide because numerous shoals touched almost the surface of the water. Of a peaceful aspect, amid gradually ascending hills, the houses covered both sides of the river, which at that time was as wide there as the Thames at London Bridge. Built upon posts, the low cottages on the right bank stood some two yards above the water, but at the back they were connected with the shelving land by a kind of stage or draw-bridge. These, however, were seldom used for intercourse with the neighbours, as there was no path and the ground was too swampy. All doors, therefore, looked towards the river, from which they had to be reached by stairs or ladders, which were thrown down at the approach of a boat.

The chief part, about three quarters of the town, however, was built on the left half of the river, on firm land that originally had been an enlarged basin of shallow water of the river-bed. In the course of centuries this basin had been filled up, and only channels were preserved for communications. Thus, while at high tide all the houses stood in the water, at low tide a net of water-lanes, spreading in all directions, formed here in the farthest East a kind of Venice. So all intercourse between the houses in the river and those back on the dry bank, and among the latter themselves, could be maintained only by means of boats.¹⁾

¹⁾ Some of these houses even had two storeys, to the great surprise of the Europeans, who had never met with such anywhere else in the Malay Archipelago.

As at Bandjermasin, the water was here the principal scene of action. Public markets were held in the different quarters of the town. At high tide the whole fleet of Chinese junks and boats laden with fish, fowl, greens, etc. floated up to — let us say East End — where women and children appeared on the stages or wharves of their houses, either merely to look on or to bargain for some trifle. If they really intended to buy, a ladder was let down into the Chinese boat, instantly followed by a dark, naked fellow, who seized his prey and climbed up again like a monkey, while his worthy mistress threw down some cowries as payment. Or, if buyer and seller could not agree upon the price, she descended with all promptness and floated in the settler's boat to the very end of the town and back again, chattering all along with neighbours of equal volubility, and feeling extremely flattered when addressed by one of the curious ladies who had come up in the same prow — let us say from West End. At low tide the market fleet, with few exceptions, sailed down to the main stream. Those merchants who had got rid of a few articles only preferred to fasten their boats to a stake, driven for that purpose into the river, and to wait for the flood. Others took with them down to West End many an East End burgher who, profiting by the opportunity, had a cheap »bus« ride through the wealthier part of the city. Notwithstanding the burning midday sun, the boat people, mostly women, drawn up under immensely large bamboo hats, the shadow of which covered their whole body, and sitting, as it were, upon their heels, would chatter with their welcome passengers through the lazy hours of the afternoon, while the men further down the river waited in the shadow of overhanging ferns for the fresher evening breeze, to fill their boats with fish, contemptuously laughing at the Chinese who worked in the pepper gardens.

Here, outside the town, Jesse had a factory built for the Company at little expense. A brisk trade in pepper began to develop, but before a year had elapsed the destruction of the Balambangan settlement decided also the fate of its young dependency.

* * *

A last step was taken in October 1774 to extend the trade at Balambangan.

Based on Dalrymple's report that cinnamon, cloves, nutmegs, pepper and clove bark could easily be introduced from the Sulu Archipelago and the adjacent islands, the Directors had specially recommended the

acquisition and cultivation of these valuable articles. An unexpected incident favoured the execution of this direction. In August 1774 an ambassador from the heir-apparent of Mindanao arrived at Balambangan, desiring intercourse and trade with the English. Among his retinue was a native of the Moluccas, long employed by the Dutch Company, who had been as far eastwards as the coast of New Guinea. This experienced traveller, Tuan Hadjee Cutchill, told the attentive English wonderful and strange stories of that immense island where the nutmeg trees were growing »in large forests«.

Herbert had many private conversations with Tuan Hadjee, in consequence of which Thomas Forrest¹⁾ was appointed to lead an expedition to New Guinea in company with Hadjee. The purpose was the acquisition of the said spices and plants. The only directions for Forrest were to avoid any troubles with the Dutch and to keep away from their possessions in the Moluccas. As the voyage was exclusively for exploration, all else was left to his discretion²⁾.

Though New Guinea was reached without the least molestation by the Dutch, no practical results arose from the undertaking, which lasted nearly two years.

At Mindanao, where Forrest received from the Sultan of Sulu, the news of the capture of Balambangan, the sultan and heir-apparent ceded to the East India Company the small island of Bunwoot to settle a factory there.³⁾ This grant, dated 12 September 1775, was forwarded to Borneo Proper and from thence to the island of Labuan, whither the English had withdrawn.

Naturally, the Company had no further interest in the cession of an island so distant from all the other settlements in India, after Balambangan had been given up. But twenty-five years later this grant was again referred to, and was of valuable assistance in favour of an attempt to found a new establishment in those quarters.

* * *

If we have adequate information about the foreign proceedings of Chief and Council, the reverse must be said of their civil service. As

¹⁾ Thomas Forrest in 1770 had been appointed Commander of the Company's marine on the west coast of Sumatra. Two years later at Fort Marlborough he got permission to embark with Herbert for Balambangan. He must have been upon good terms with the Chief, who entrusted him with the arduous task of exploration to the eastward.

²⁾ Forrest, Th., *A Voyage to New Guinea*, p. 3—10.

³⁾ *Ibid.* p. 251.

has been pointed out, they had every reason to keep the Directors ignorant in this matter. What we know has been collected from the few letters which were addressed to the Court and from the correspondence of Bengal, Bombay and Fort St. George. Some welcome light has been thrown upon this dark chapter also by the Case about Herbert's affairs, compiled in 1779.

The most striking feature of the internal administration of Balambangan is that gigantic expenses were continually booked, but no income was entered, although the Presidencies sent great quantities of stores and goods for sale. Besides the ships already mentioned, Bombay despatched in July 1774 the »Restoration«, with 360 bales of broadcloth and 309 bales of piece goods to the value of £34,000¹⁾ (an exceptionally rich cargo for those regions). In the following month they sent on board the »Eagle« and the »Speedwell« stores and provisions to nearly the same amount. Yet not one penny for the sale of these cargoes was entered in any book, nor were the Directors informed of the use they had made of them. On the contrary, the Chief continued to draw bills upon them and the Presidents in India, payable to his wife, Hunter, or any other person. In a letter of 15 September 1774²⁾ Herbert, Coles and Palmer, the new members of Council, informed the Court that owing to its letter of 19 November 1773 they endeavoured to be more economical; that they had bought a ship, the »Antelope«, from Hunter, for 32,110 dollars; but that, finding nothing in their treasury, they had asked for 5,000 dollars from the Super-cargoes at Canton, and that they had drawn bills upon the Company to the amount of £36,492.2.7!

During the following years at least two or three scores of bills were presented to the Directors by persons of whom they had not the least knowledge of having been at Balambangan. Mrs. Anne Hunter presented a bill of exchange to be paid to her amounting to £8113.5.1; a Mrs. Anne Hornby asked for £3575.13.1/4; then followed James King, William Neat, Charles Fowles, James Mossfatt, the Captains Hamilton, Milford, George Hayter and James Scott, Hopper and Major James Kirkpatrick — a long, long procession of creditors each holding an unpaid certificate of exchange in his hand!

The Company energetically refused to pay,³⁾ founding their resolution on the advice of the Joint Committee of Accounts and Law

¹⁾ Letters from Bombay, 14 July 1774.

²⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo.

³⁾ Court Minutes, 19 July and 4 Oct. 1775 and 21 March 1776; Fact. Rec. Borneo, Letter to Balambangan, 4 Sept. 1774.

Suits and of Wedderburn and Waldare. For these argued that this enormous expenditure was »inconsistent with the Act of Parliament of the thirteenth year of His present Majesty«,¹⁾ by which the Court were restrained from accepting bills drawn by the Company's Presidencies beyond a certain amount per annum. The respective passage runs as follows²⁾: »... until the said sum of one million four hundred thousand pounds shall be repaid, it shall not be lawful for the said United Company, or their successors, or any of their officers or servants on their account, to accept, or otherwise bind the said Company, or their successors, for the payment of any bill or bills of exchange drawn by any of their officers or servants at any of their Presidencies in the East Indies, for any sum exceeding the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, exclusive of certificates to the amount of five thousand pounds, to the commanders and officers of each of the Company's ships, in the space of any one year, without the consent or order first had and obtained of the commissioners of His Majesty's treasury now and for the time being, or any three and more of them, or of the high treasurer for the time being, who are hereby respectively authorised to give such consent, or to make such order thereon, as they shall judge expedient, and every acceptance or engagement made, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act shall be null and void to all intents and purposes«.

The examiners, Wedderburn and Waldare, stated that no action could be supported against the Company because the Company's seal was not affixed to those numerous bonds issued at Balambangan.

On the other hand, they feared that the holders of those bills could base their claims on the foundation that Balambangan had been declared an independent Chiefship and empowered with the same authority as a Presidency, in which was included the right to borrow or to take up money in the name of the Company. Further, they noted that the creditors could not know that Herbert acted in contradiction to the Directors' private orders, and that they therefore had accepted as *bona fide* payment bills drawn on the Company by its legal representative.³⁾ They concluded, however, that the Company could risk a lawsuit in order to dispute the reality of the debts. As a matter of fact they found that Herbert and his associates could be compelled to

¹⁾ Court Minutes 14 June 1775.

²⁾ Statutes at Large, 1773, Cap. 64, XVI.

³⁾ Case 1779.

pay the enormous debt, and all the damages the Company suffered by their disobedience. But this was more easily said than done!

Returning to Balambangan, we can find at least part of the expenses caused by granting extravagant salaries to the servants. The instructions of 12 June 1771 allowed the six civil servants a salary amounting to £1700 per annum. Herbert raised it to £2963.15.0. He granted £2025.10.0 as salaries and allowances to four persons not authorised by the Court, and entertained writers, readers and interpreters with £755, so that the salaries paid in the first year were £7445 instead of £1700! For 1774/75 he proposed to award himself and his associates even some hundred pounds more.¹⁾

As reports continuously arrived that owing to dissensions the best servants were dismissed, not only their service at Balambangan, but that Herbert, in his arrogant behaviour as Chief, had assumed also the authority to dismiss them the Company's service,²⁾ the Directors' patience gave way, the more so as they perceived that their directions given in the letter of 19 September 1773 had not the least influence on the conduct of Chief and Council. They sent drastic orders³⁾ that the Chief no longer should execute alone the office of treasurer and that no advance exceeding a small sum should be made to him. Further, they prohibited him from drawing any bills of exchange upon the Directors or the Presidents. They refused to pay the bills to Hunter, Herbert and Alcock, and denied to Chief and Council the right to dismiss persons from their service.

Well aware that these orders were likely to have as little effect as the preceding ones, they sought for proper measures to make amends for the sustained losses and distress, rumours of which spread from the India House to the most unconcerned Londoner.

At this moment the man reappeared on the stage who alone would have been able to save the situation. »Ever solicitous for the prosperity of Balambangan of which there seems to be no expectation under the present management, I think it incumbent on me again to make a tender of my services«⁴⁾ Alexander Dalrymple wrote to the Directors. He had come into closer contact with the Company a few months ago, when the Directors had allowed him 200 guineas for completing and publishing charts of the tracts from Balambangan and Sulu to China.⁵⁾

¹⁾ Statement 1774.

²⁾ Letters from Bengal, 17 October 1774.

³⁾ Home Misc. 771, 4 September 1774.

⁴⁾ Court Minutes, 6 October 1774. — ⁵⁾ Ditto, 22 June and 13 July 1774.

Partly on his suggestion it was referred to the Committee of Correspondence to consider the proper measures to be taken concerning the transactions of the Chief and Council at Balambangan, to recommend a Supervisor to carry the Court's orders into execution, and a person to act as secretary...¹⁾

One Joseph Hurlock was recommended as Supervisor; but a General Court on 8th December resolved to postpone the appointment of a supervisor and to recommend the Directors to consider first if it were not more conducive to the Company's interest to withdraw the Balambangan establishment and so to secure at least the effects which still were there.

Apparently this resolution was influenced by a Proprietor who, representing Mrs. Mary Herbert, in the beginning of the session read a letter of hers in which she humbly asked for lenity to her husband and that he might not be dismissed or superseded before he could defend himself.²⁾

On the following day Dalrymple presented the terms on which he would engage to proceed to Balambangan; but they were neither taken into consideration nor reported on by the Committee of Correspondence.

In the course of the next week the Court of Directors and the Committee of Correspondence, in order to lessen the expenses and for the security of the recovery of their effects at Balambangan, resolved to send a new Chief and Council thither under a limited plan. This directed that the expenses should not exceed £10,000 per annum and that Chief and Council were strictly prohibited from private trade.³⁾ In case of accidents preventing their continuing at Balambangan, no attempt whatever to settle elsewhere should be made.⁴⁾

Governor and Council at Bombay were ordered to despatch Ewart, the future Second in Council, to Balambangan immediately after the receipt of the letter. At the West Coast he was to be joined by Nairne, the new Chief, and Lennox, Third in Council, from Fort St. George. This was to be effected on a special cruiser in case the »Syren«, which carried the orders, should have left Bencoolen on Ewart's arriving there.⁵⁾ Similar information was despatched to Bengal and Madras.⁶⁾

¹⁾ Court Minutes, 11 Nov. 1774.

²⁾ Ditto, 8 Dec. 1774.

³⁾ Correspondence Reports, 13 and 15 Dec. 1774.

⁴⁾ Home Misc. 119. Letter to Nairne, Ewart and Lennox, 3 Jan. 1775.

⁵⁾ Dispatches to Bombay, 3 Jan. 1775.

⁶⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 4 Jan. 1775.

and by the same conveyance Herbert and his associates were ordered to return home to justify their administration.¹⁾

Yet ere any of these letters, even that of 4th September, could reach Bombay, much less Balambangan itself, fate here had anticipated the Directors' measures.

When the »Eagle«, which had left Balambangan early in January 1775, stayed at Brunei to take in pepper, suddenly towards evening of the 15th March a single European in a small boat was brought up the river by some natives, who had caught him as he tried to slide along the river to the English factory. It was Edward Coles, late Second in Council at Balambangan. He told the astonished Resident, Jesse, of the terrible things which had befallen them on the island.

On the 19th of the same month, Palmer, Third in Council, joined him, and the next day John Herbert²⁾ brought in the »Endeavour« the rest of the servants, military and civil, and about fifty slaves. He completed the dreadful stories by adding complaints about their sad plight and disclosing his intention to establish a settlement in the King of Brunei's dominions.

Owing to Jesse's skilful and kind behaviour, with which in a few months he had won the sympathy of the natives, the Sultan obligingly expressed his willingness to cede to the English whatever place they might choose, and on 28 March 1775 he signed a treaty by which he granted the Island of Labuan to the English East India Company for all time.³⁾ On 16th April following the »Endeavour« set sail for the acquired island, and Herbert hoisted the Company's flag on the spot where a new establishment with a fort was to be founded.⁴⁾

§ 5.

The Capture of Balambangan.

At daybreak on the 26th February 1775 the large gun in the stockade as usual announced the morning. Alert sentries had kept a sharp watch during the night, as for some six or seven weeks rumours had been afloat that one of the Sulu Datus, called Teting, had planned to attack the English. As a trustworthy and skilful builder, Sultan Israel had sent him to help the English in building warehouses and

¹⁾ Fact. Rec. Borneo, 3 Jan. 1775.

²⁾ Eagle Journal, 15, 19 and 20 March 1775.

³⁾ Ditto, 28 March 1775.

⁴⁾ Home Misc. 119, Letter from Fort Marlborough, 24 July 1775.

magazines. But in the course of the year, being settled at Balambangan and adopting the Chief's extravagant manners, he gradually incurred great debts. These at first did not trouble him much, but when the Chief pressed him for payment Teting, Isral's first cousin, finding no other way to save his honour, and to punish Herbert's insults at the same time, decided to extirpate all traces of his debts by a coup de main. In the course of a few weeks some more pangarans landed. Sulu warriors were hidden in the near island of Banguay, and since the 20th February everyone knew that the establishment would be attacked some night by surprise. Hence the increased number of sentinels at the Chief's dwelling, the watchhouse on the stockade and before the barracks of the sepoy. Every morning they were removed, as by daylight the English did not fear any Malayan force.

On the 26th, as was always the case after the reveille had sounded, some silent minutes followed the gun-shot while the sentries slowly walked back into their barracks. At this moment gigantic flames and dense smoke whirled up out of one of the houses situated on the road inland;¹⁾ and out from the thick bushes behind the magazine and the sepoy's barracks rushed some hundred Sulus. In a few seconds the sepoy were surrounded and overpowered in their quarters. Another enemy party rushed to the guns on the stockade, turned them on the Bughis, who were sallying out of their homes, and dispersed them in a few minutes, assisted by a third troop which had entered on the right hand. A short, desperate battle followed with the officers, who had to fight their way through. As soon as they reached one of the exits, however, the English, the Bughis, and the sepoy all rushed down in a panic to the vessels, leaving everything behind, driven by the impulse of self-preservation. Here they were joined by Herbert, who fled from his house, about a mile distant, to the »Endeavour«. The few settlers who had survived a deadly disease were slain on their way to the ships, while the Chinese rowed in their junks out to the beach. Soon flames ascended from the buildings within the stockade, then from the Chinese huts and the house on the point. Towards ten o'clock, Coles's house, a large go-down and the buildings inland were plundered and shared the same fate. Still the Chief's house and the large go-downs were untouched and far out of the enemy's reach; but not the least attempt was made to save anything in them. Probably the Sulus, who

¹⁾ The Plan of Balambangan, preserved among Dalrymple's Charts, reports the signal for the attack to be given from Sulu junks hauled up on the beach.

had possessed themselves of the »Phoenix«, hindered them from doing so. It was seven hours later when the enemy began to plunder the Chief's house, and the English, when they turned into the open sea in their flight, saw flames and smoke ascending from the last buildings to bid them farewell.

Thirteen of the garrison were missing, not one paper or book was saved, much less any of the property on shore, estimated at 926,886 dollars,¹⁾ while the value of the different vessels saved and of the consignments on board them was computed at 240,520 Spanish dollars.

As soon as they heard of the misfortune that had befallen the establishment at Balambangan, the English Factors at Sulu embarked in all haste and fled to China.

And now, who were the instigators of that catastrophe, and who could be considered culpable?

The description given in this work of the attack and the fight is principally composed according to the report of Captain Forrest²⁾. He was informed of it at Mindanao by a Sulu messenger, who brought him a letter from Sultan Israel. In this, Israel told him that the treachery had been planned and executed without his knowledge and that it was his wish that the English should come and settle again at Sulu. All the other authorities, except that of Bengal, agree that Israel could not have been ignorant of the plan.

Salceby³⁾, undoubtedly one of the best informed authors in those matters, gives the most plausible explanation. He says that since the accession of Israel to the throne, and during the last years of his father's reign, Sulu was divided into two political parties: the one, headed by Israel, inclining more towards an alliance with Spain; the other, led by the most influential Datus, favouring the English. The latter was the more powerful on the arrival of the English in 1773. But towards 1775 this party weakened; suspicion prevailed against the English, who were building small fortifications at Balambangan, and therefore the garrison, there »was treacherously attacked and destroyed by Sulu agents and forces secretly sent there by Sultan Israel and his Council«.

Hunt⁴⁾ goes even further, in stating that Spaniards from Manila and the Dutch from Ternate instigated the Sulus.

¹⁾ Home Misc. 119, Letter from Fort Marlborough 24 July 1775.

²⁾ Forrest: *A Voyage to New Guinea*, p. 336 foll.

³⁾ Salceby N. M.: *History of Sulu*, p. 183—187; Manila 1908.

⁴⁾ Hunt: *Some Particulars relative to Sulu*.

Statements of this kind are more easily proffered than proved! Although the joy which Carlos III. has expressed when he heard that Sultan Israel had refused the English permission to transfer the Balambangan settlement into the neighbourhood of his capital would speak in favour of such a suspicion, nothing can be proved. Equally, the accusation of the Dutch having originated such a wicked design at Sulu cannot be founded on the slightest evidence, unless one would judge so from the fact that their general at Batavia was the first to inform Fort St. George of the disaster, in consequence of intelligence he had received from Celebes¹⁾. But no one will, on such an unfounded hypothesis, accuse a nation of such a crime, without having any authentic proof at hand, the more so as the Dutch exercised the least influence at Sulu.

John Herbert and Thomas Palmer, the refugees at Labuan informed, the Governor and Council at Madras that Balambangan had been taken »by a large body of Suluans in conjunction with several piratical rovers and inhabitants of the circumjacent islands«.²⁾

Of great interest is the report made by Sir John Clerke, Commander of the »Dolphin«, at Bengal.³⁾ He had been despatched to Balambangan with 500 chests of opium on board.⁴⁾ There he found nothing but ruins: no natives, no Chinese, no English, but one Mr. Barton, who had been deputed by Herbert from Labuan to give notice to ships touching at the devastated establishment of the place to which the factory had retired. From Barton's information »such strong marks of negligence and want of caution«⁵⁾ appeared, that they are worth attention.

He told Sir John Clerke that Herbert had been fully advised of the plan; that he did not throw up any entrenchments on the sides which lay open, but that he even suffered a quantity of furze to remain there which afforded a convenient ambuscade for the assailants. He added that this act of hostility had been committed by one of the nobles of Sulu without the authority or consent of the Sultan.

The Government at Bengal were of the same opinion, owing to the report of Sir John Clerke, who had sailed directly from Balambangan to Sulu, with a view of obtaining reparation for the injury. The Sultan

¹⁾ Letters from Madras, 14 October 1775.

²⁾ Madras Publ. Proc., 22 February 1776.

³⁾ Home Misc., 122, Letter from Bengal, 20 Nov. 1775.

⁴⁾ Letters from Bengal, 16 May 1775.

⁵⁾ Ditto, 20 Nov. 1775.

received both his messenger and Sir John Clerke himself in an arrogant and haughty manner, but soon condescended to give redress for the crime committed by one of his vassals. Clarke demanded 400,000 dollars, while Israel »with signs of derision« offered only 10,000 dollars, whereupon the English left his court immediately »giving him to expect a more disagreeable visit«.

Judging from all these different reports it would be extremely difficult to form a definite idea of the authors of the treachery. If we, however, consider Sultan Israel, to the extent that we have become acquainted with him: his sly and artful character, his skill in disguising what he really thought so that neither English nor Spaniards could ever penetrate his plans and intentions; and if we finally remember the duplicity he revealed in 1774 in his secret correspondence with Carlos III., we must confess that there can be no great error in thinking that he did know of the plan and that he privately sent agents and warriors to Balambangan to assist his cousin in getting rid of his annoying creditors and to help the State to be delivered from a European neighbour who threatened to become too mighty. Without being a national enterprise, the attack on Balambangan was an act arising from the private and political considerations of some influential Datus and the Sultan.

But with that inhuman treachery the Sulu Empire began to decline; it sank gradually down to the rank of a piratical state, to such an extent that in the first half of the nineteenth century it was famous as the heart of the piratical system.

As has been obvious from the report from Bengal, heavy accusations of negligence and want of caution lay on Herbert. These reproaches slowly took the shape of suspicion that he had even been in conspiracy with the Sulus. The fact that his house, built about one mile distant from the stockade, was not attacked for seven hours, although one party of the enemy had landed near it, may be suspicious. Holmes, the purser at Balambangan, confessed in 1779 that no regular accounts of the transactions ever existed, and that no precautions were taken to save the Company's property and books, although on the eve of the attack the manner of the same and the signals to be given had been explained to the Chief. He, however, would not believe that Herbert really connived at the assault, or that later on he had any communications with the captors.

As neither the Company nor any of his contemporaries reproached him with such an awful crime, we have no reason to do so now. Nevertheless, it is the duty of an impartial observer to state that to

Herbert the attack and the burning down of the whole settlement was a longed-for opportunity to extricate himself from the network of numberless frauds and interceptions in which he had taken refuge to enable him to discharge the enormous debts that had almost crushed and ruined him before he was appointed Chief of Balambangan.

* * *

A few words must be said about the lot of those remaining at Labuan and of the Agency at Brunei. Strictly speaking, their fate was decided by the orders the new Chief and Council brought with them when they arrived at Labuan on 9th November 1775.

Here they found people busy in fortifying the place. Herbert had already sent indents for goods to Madras and Bombay, with bills drawn upon the Presidents and Councils, which however were refused by them.¹⁾ The factory, therefore, was in great want. W. Bross and George Salmon, appointed Chief and Council because Nairne, Ewart and Lennox had declined to accept, withdrew the new settlement at once according to the Directors' orders not to make any attempt elsewhere if prevented from continuing at Balambangan. In the same month they sailed for Batavia, where they hoped to dispose of the remaining opium and European broadcloth.²⁾

Also the Factory at Borneo Proper must have been removed at the same time, for, when in 1777 Captain Farmer of H. M. S. »Seahorse« on his return from China touched at Brunei »they had all quitted that place and were returned to Bencoolen«.³⁾

Orders were then sent to the Presidencies to lay hands on Herbert's property⁴⁾ and to seize him. But all researches were in vain: He fled from one place in India to another⁵⁾, while his associates, Palmer and Coles, were restored to their rank at Fort Marlborough after having given evidence against their former Chief before the Court of Directors.⁶⁾

We have alluded to the many troubles which the Joint Committee of Accounts and Law Suits had with the numerous people in possession of unpaid Balambangan bonds. Many of them had been satisfied in 1776, but a great number had to wait until after 1779, in which year

¹⁾ Letters from Bombay, 28 November 1775.

²⁾ Madras Publ. Proc., 16 January 1776.

³⁾ Letters from Bengal, 3 March 1777.

⁴⁾ Dispatches to Bengal and Bombay, 5 April 1776.

⁵⁾ Bombay Publ. Proc., 8 Jan. 1777.

⁶⁾ Court Minutes, 2 Mai 1777 to 4 March 1778.

Wedderburn and Waldare explained to the Directors the propriety of complying with the demands of the creditors. The investigations into Herbert's management ended in 1781, when the Company granted him permission to return to India.¹⁾

Thus, after twenty years of repeated attempts, ended the endeavours to secure for the English East India Company and for Great Britain a base in the Far East for improving and extending the trade to China and the East Asiatic Archipelago. It seemed as if Dalrymple's enemies were right in their judgment, pronounced after his voyages, that no results could be expected from them. But an undertaking which had caused so much ado, and which already had advanced so far, could not entirely drop out of sight. It was to remain unnoticed until new circumstances required its being taken up again to make Balambangan an important military centre in the great era of the Napoleonic Wars.

¹⁾ Correspondence Reports, 14 September 1781.

Chapter IV.
The Second Balambangan Period.
1803—1805.

A short interval separates the events which are treated in this chapter from those of the preceding one. But for mankind those twenty-five years were of greater importance than both the previous centuries together. The French Revolution destroyed the old traditions and old-established institutions and aimed at bringing Liberty and Equality to all, and in the wars of the following twenty years these ideas were propagated to the boundaries of Russia and westward to the banks of the Channel. Here an armament of men-of-war was stationed to stop them at the doors of Great Britain. That ships and armaments, however, could not prevent philosophical ideas from penetrating into countries, regardless of barriers, was proved on the Continent and throughout the world.

Great Britain, and with it the East India Company, followed the common course prescribed by History. They too had to undergo revolutions, before and after that of France, only they were not sullied by bloodshed.

The present chapter must needs contain a few references to these disturbances and to the evolution in the administration of the East India Company.

Owing to the mismanagement of the Company's affairs in the East, the Government was obliged to interfere in 1763 and again in 1773. In 1772 the debts exceeded seven million pounds, and the Directors were no longer able to discharge them without taking up a loan of at least one million pounds from the State. The Parliament, assembled by George III. in the autumn of the same year, passed an Act by which the Company was to be put under the control of the State. The governments of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa were to be transferred

to the Governor General, the Supreme Office for India, and to four Councillors to whom all the other Presidencies were subordinate. The Governor General and all the other servants and officers were strictly prohibited from private trade. As by the same Act the King was authorised to advance the Company £1,400,000 from the Treasury, the Company in future had to lay all the correspondence before the Ministers, and every half-year to give an account of its debts.

Fortunately Warren Hastings, the first Governor General, was a man whose ability as Governor and Officer enabled him to procure so considerable an income that the debts could be paid back to the State within a few years. The consequence was that the public interest in the Company vanished for a few years until, by the new policy which Hastings adopted towards the natives and the incessant expeditions with and against them, the finances again fell into a worse state. The public was revolted at the cruelties, the barbarous behaviour, the extravagances and excesses of the Company's administrators which were revealed by the negotiations preliminary to the Treaty of Paris in 1783. Pitt and Fox urgently asked for reformation and amelioration, and on 13 August 1784 the East India Bill, reflecting Pitt's ambiguous policy, increased both the influence of the Government and the powers of the Directors to the detriment of the shareholders.

This Bill established the India Board, or the Board of Control, consisting of six Privy Councillors, appointed by the King, one of the members, as President, having the functions and powers of a Secretary of State. The aim of this Board was to represent the Government in matters relative to India and the Company. All the papers concerning civil and military affairs of India, and all the proceedings of the Company, were to be presented to the Board who controlled its policy.

Thus the Company was compelled to leave the decision on political matters to the Government, and to limit itself to commercial affairs, in which it was to be absolute. For this loss of influence the Directors were partly indemnified by the regulation that their resolutions, when consented to by the Board, could not be altered by a General Court of Proprietors.

By the Act of 1786 the power of the Governor General and of the Presidents in India was increased, and by the Declaratory Act of 1788 the Board of Control was granted permission to send troops to India without consulting the Directors.

The changes tending to a concentration of the administration in India are not of sufficient importance to the present work to be dealt

with. It may, however, be noted that owing to the almost independent position of the Governor General, and to Sir John Shore's successful endeavours to make Bengal the nucleus of the management of the Company's affairs in India, the next attempts to recover a base in the East were directed from Bengal by the new Governor General, Arthur Wellesley, Earl of Mornington.

§ 1.

The Occupation of Balambangan as a Result of the Treaty of Amiens.

After 1775 no endeavours were made either to recover the immense losses sustained at Balambangan or to re-establish a factory there or in its vicinity.

The Dutch profited considerably by this inactivity of their rivals, and in 1786 obtained cessions of territories from the Sultan of Bandjermasin and important privileges from the King of Soekadana. Although five years later the relations with Soekadana were entirely given up, the influence of the Dutch Company remained preponderant in Borneo for the next thirty years, owing to its position in the south-east of the island, where it could not be expelled even after 1795. With this date the proper history of this chapter begins.

Late in 1794 Pichegru invaded Holland with an overwhelming force, and the Batavian Republic was put under the protection of France. In other words, England henceforward had to regard its powerful rival in the East as an enemy. The presumption was that the French would possess themselves of the Dutch Colonies. The Prince of Orange, then staying as a refugee near London, may have helped to increase that suspicion, for when orders were issued from England that the enemy's possessions in the East should be occupied, he recommended the Dutch Governors to receive the English as friends and allies. So it happened that the conquest of the Moluccas in 1795 was in fact a sort of holiday-trip for the English navy in the East. Except at the Cape of Good Hope, in Ceylon, and in the Malay Peninsula and Cochin China, no resistance whatever was made. Forces equipped at Fort St. George, and assisted by some men-of-war of the Royal Navy under Admiral Ranier, took the said positions and Banda and Amboyna in about half a year, so that early in 1796, when the old Dutch Company was abolished, all its important settlements, except Java, Ternate, Palambang, Bandjermasin, Macassar and Timor, were under English protection.

In the same year steps had been taken for an expedition against the Spaniards at Manila, but it was given up in consequence of the Peace of Campo Formio. The less important settlements in the Moluccas were occupied in the course of the next few years.

At Amboyna a Resident for the Moluccas was established, who entered into amicable relations with the still independent Sultan Nookoo of Tidore. It appears that the Directors laid great stress on this friendship, as they were of opinion that in the next peace the Moluccas most likely would be restored to Holland.¹⁾ They therefore ordered the Resident either to return to the said Sultan the territories wrested from him in 1795, or to prevail upon him to give them up as a gift.

These orders concerned chiefly the Sultan's dominions in Gebi and the neighbouring islands, where the Company intended to establish a port in the islet of Fau, which contains the harbour called Abraham's Bosom. That place was desired as a shelter for the passing vessels of the Company.

Colonel Oliver, the chief civil and military authority at Amboyna, easily succeeded in obtaining the desired grants, but on the advice of Resident Farquhar neither Gebi nor Fau was occupied. He had formerly received the cession of the island of Ouby Major from the Sultan of Batjan.²⁾ In his opinion this place had many advantages over Fau, owing to its abundance of nutmeg, clove, sago and fruit trees. Still more, as the Dutch never appreciated the value of Ouby Major, he hoped that they would show little resistance to the English retaining it, as a place of refreshment for their returning Chinese ships, in case the Moluccas were to be restored. And, together with Colonel Oliver, he proceeded to take measures for the occupation of the island.

Governor and Council at Fort St. George, however, protested against these proceedings, because no information from the Court of Directors authorised an establishment at Ouby Major. On the contrary, they had changed their mind, and in a letter to Madras³⁾ expressed their new point of view concerning the general relations of commerce. They stated that owing to measures taken for extending the spice trade in India, the value of the Moluccas would be considerably lessened for the Dutch, and that therefore a British establishment in those quarters was no longer desirable.

¹⁾ Dispatches to Madras, 22 April 1801.

²⁾ Board's Collection, 2769.

³⁾ Ditto, 2 Nov. 1802.

Farquhar shared this opinion. In a few words he pointed out the advantages the English had experienced by the temporary possession of the Moluccas.¹⁾ They had acquired a full insight into the navigation and the trade of the Dutch, and through this a monopoly of spices, such as these rivals had enjoyed for centuries, could henceforth be prevented.

Lord Wellesley, the Governor General, was only in part of the same opinion. To him it was clear that, according to the Third Article of the Treaty of Amiens, 25 March 1802, all the powers and privileges possessed by the Dutch previous to 1795 must be restored, *inter alia*, Gebi, Fau and Ouby Major. The retaining of one of these islands would have been a manifest injury to the interests and the power of the Batavian Republic.²⁾ As consequently no thought whatever could be entertained of keeping a base in the Moluccas, the Governor General **decided upon the restoration of the establishment in the island of Balambangan**, the commercial advantages of which station in his Lordship's opinion greatly exceed those derivable from the possession of the island of Gebi.³⁾

He judged that the claims of the East India Company to Balambangan had never been formally renounced, and that an occupation of it would be merely a repetition of that in 1769. He was the more inclined to make that island a shelter for the trading ships to China as the sovereignty of Sulu had been acknowledged by Spain and Holland, so that no troubles were to be expected with these powers. Finally, he had every reason to believe that the Sultan desired the English to come and re-open a trade with his subjects.

For this purpose Robert J. Farquhar, Resident at Amboyna, received the final instructions on 3rd May⁴⁾ which directed him to restore the Moluccas to the Dutch and to re-occupy Balambangan at the same time in connection with that restitution.

In the introduction to the orders Lord Wellesley gives in a few words the aim of the occupation, after having devoted a few lines to the history of the former establishment at Balambangan.⁵⁾ Being well situated for communication between Malacca and China, with a commodious

¹⁾ Board's Collection, 2769, 2. Nov. 1802.

²⁾ Ditto, 2770, Letter from the Supreme Government to Madras, 15 March 1803.

³⁾ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁾ Bengal Foreign Consult., 15 March 1803.

⁵⁾ That he dates its cession in the year 1767 may point to the fact that within a quarter of a century the first establishment there had practically become a fable.

harbour, the island was to be utilised for shelter and provision for the fleet in the Eastern Seas. Besides its commercial value for the trade in gold dust, diamonds and pepper, quite new hopes and expectations were founded upon it. Lord Wellesley thought it fit for a centre for naval operations against any European power, which could easily be watched from thence and harassed in its transactions. It was evident that considerable political influence on the natives would emanate from the possession of this prominent port, so that not only would the demand for opium and piece goods increase, but in a short time new alliances might be entered into.

We see the effect of the progress made in Borneo concerning the welfare of Great Britain and that of the Company. Originally some few vessels had been dispatched thither from time to time in order to take in a cargo of pepper. Later on factors were sent to open a trade, mostly in barter, and to keep a permanent factory there. As simultaneously far in the North a trade was carried on with an almost insatiable market, the plan to connect the Borneo trade with that to Canton was soon realised. A circular-commerce of European goods to the West Coast of Sumatra, of Coast goods to Borneo, of Borneo produce to China, and of Chinese wares and produce back to the Coromandel Coast and London, flourished, with interruptions, until the Dutch intruded on the trade to the South Coast of Borneo. As the China trade without any intermediate station was liable to too many risks and dangers a fresh attempt was made on North Borneo and Balambangan to relieve it and to extend and improve the trade in the East in general. At this point, viz. after 1758, the importance of Borneo grew rapidly owing to the Director's plan to draw within the Company's influence not only further parts of China but the unfrequented parts of Asia. Borneo was on the point of becoming the nucleus of a vast and almost unlimited reservoir of countries and islands for the Company's trade, though it was clearly stated that no political ambitions were connected with the new venture.

In 1803, as the idea of re-occupying the same place took its origin in the great administrator and officer, Arthur Wellesley, it suddenly took quite a new shape. North Borneo, especially Balambangan, was to become a military station made responsible for the gigantic task of watching the Dutch in the Moluccas and the Spaniards in the Philippines, and of contesting with them the leading position in the Extreme East.

Could such an enterprise, which must have been chimerical even when attempted in time of peace, prosper at a time when Great Britain

after an interval of only one year was again involved in the endless Napoleonic Wars? And could the Company sustain such enormous expenses as unquestionably were to be expected from a military establishment in a small, and in fact barren, island?

The instructions to Farquhar were very concise, as all was left to his discretion. He was recommended to correspond at first with the Sultan of Sulu, to whom the Governor General addressed a letter in which he acquainted him with the fact that »various circumstances« had prevented the English from renewing the former excellent relations of friendship and alliance, but that they were now going to make amends for it by taking possession of the place which the Sultan's ancestors had ceded to the Company,¹⁾ and concluding an engagement with him to the advantage of both parties. The only point on which Lord Wellesley insisted was that Farquhar should not make the least concessions to the Sultan in return for his assistance, as the English were merely asserting old claims. Further, he should not enter into any agreement disadvantageous to the English in relation to the neighbouring native powers. As speed was desired, Farquhar was advised to touch at Sulu on his voyage from Malacca to Amboyna. Yet in any case the occupation of Balambangan was to take place after the restitution of the Dutch settlements with part of the troops returning from the Moluccas. For those who were to remain at the island as garrison adequate military stores and provisions would be provided from Bengal and the Coast.

So far all was clearly pointed out, and Farquhar was preparing to start on his mission, when information came from Amboyna that Colonel Oliver, Commander of the British forces in those quarters, had already restored the Moluccas, except Ternate, to the Dutch, who had arrived there in February 1803.²⁾

This unexpected event caused the first alteration and delay in the enterprise. Farquhar, changing his tactics, gathered the returning Molucca troops at Malacca, which had not yet been restored to the Dutch. He

¹⁾ The Governor General may have felt a certain satisfaction in the fact that the Sulus did not keep Annals, and that they were as little versed as he in the history of their relations with, and the cession of Balambangan to, the English. Undoubtedly it would have been decidedly uncomplimentary to Lord Wellesley if one of the Sulu Chiefs had informed him that Balambangan had not been ceded to Herbert in 1767!

²⁾ Bengal Foreign Consult., 29 Dec. 1803. Col. Oliver's letter from Amboyna of 7 April 1803.

was ready to sail in the cruiser »Mornington« when at the last moment a dispatch from London informed him that hostilities between England and France had broken out again.¹⁾ This caused him so much embarrassment that he resolved to postpone the expedition until new instructions should arrive.

When, however, the monsoon ended, and there was still no advice from Fort William, Farquhar left Malacca with eight large and middle-sized ships, with a considerable force and a number of settlers on board.

The detachment consisted of about 800 officers and soldiers. Settlers had been recruited at Malacca, mostly artisans and labourers, who were to receive maintenance from the Company until they were enabled to provide for themselves. 4750 tons of provisions and stores, sufficient for twelve months, had been put on board. In fact it was a real migration of part of the population of Malacca!

Farquhar's hopes concerning an establishment at Balambangan exceeded even those of the Governor General. Considering that the Dutch probably would not take back Malacca, he feared that an English settlement there would be a rival, to the detriment of that in Prince of Wales Island. The latter, however, he argued, together with Balambangan, would secure to the English the whole trade to the East. Therefore he recommended the destruction of the fortifications in Malacca and the withdrawal of the garrison, in order to defray the expenses which in the beginning were to be sustained at the next settlement.²⁾

Major Cales was appointed Commander of the troops; Captain Dawsonne was advanced to the rank of Deputy Paymaster and Commissioner of Provisions; Lieutenant Ross became Commissioner of Stores; another held the rank of Adjutant and Quarter-Master,³⁾ etc. Everything was prepared and appointed so that no time was to be lost in establishing the garrison.

But now the situation changed. While sailing in the China Sea a tremendous typhoon scattered the fleet in every direction. Day turned to night and clouds to water, for half a week, and when slowly the dispersed ships gathered around their flagship two of the largest cruisers, the »Thornhill« and the »Anstruther«, were missing. They had struck rocks and had sunk instantly, with one hundred soldiers

¹⁾ Bengal Secret & Polit. Cons. 18 July 1805, Farquhar's letter from Malacca of 29 Aug. 1803.

²⁾ Ibid.

³⁾ Bengal Secret & Polit. Cons. 18 July 1805, Letter from Farquhar 6 Juli 1803.

and seamen and the whole cargo, while 400 men had succeeded in saving their lives, reaching the small island of Mangsee in boats, where they were taken on board by one of the smaller vessels.

On 29th September 1803 the fleet drew up in line at the beach of Balambangan, where the erection of temporary fortifications was at once begun. Part of the soldiers remained ready to march, and all the provisions and stores were kept on board, as every moment an attack might be expected either from a Spanish, Dutch or French armament. This precaution turned out to be of great detriment to the garrison, for, only one month later a third ship with its whole cargo was destroyed, this time by fire.

Farquhar, considering the reduced force of the marine and quantity of stores, and hearing that valuable English and Portuguese ships were sailing from China, dispatched orders to Malacca to send more men-of-war for protection. And as the Spaniards were reported to have collected an increasing number of troops at Manila, he even suggested that the garrison of Balambangan, together with 7,000 soldiers from the Presidencies, should make an attack there.

Except the losses sustained by storm and fire, the island seemed to fulfil all expectations, at any rate judging from experiences in the first month there. The English found the climate healthy and the two harbours excellent. The natives seemed to have been attracted by magic, for within a few weeks more than fifty of their prows and junks came to trade in the port. Leading people from Borneo and Mindanao flocked to the Commander's cruiser with sincere signs of friendship and a hearty desire that he might come and trade with them. Universal joy seized the surrounding powers, as the natives held the Dutch and the Spaniards in abhorrence, and they hoped, from the renewal of war with France, for the extirpation of those two nations in the Eastern Seas. The Sultan of Sulu, »under his Royal chop«, acknowledged his perfect concurrence in the re-establishment of the British authority at Balambangan »and its dependencies«.¹⁾ Supplies were brought in plenty from the adjacent islands, so that in a short time the establishment was in a flourishing situation, the garrison healthy and well provided with provisions and money. As, moreover, Farquhar reported the island to be abundant »in cattle and grain«, there was sufficient reason to believe that it could be maintained absolutely independent of India.

¹⁾ Bengal Secret and Polit. Cons., 18 July 1805. Letter from Farquhar, 26 Nov., 1803.

It is interesting to put here the question whether these exaggerations concerning the advantages of Balambangan had been made unconsciously, or intentionally, by Farquhar. We must admit that he was not the man to deceive anyone for his own profit, or to tell an untruth, bitter as truth might have been. He was a man of the character of Sir Stamford Raffles, honest and sincere to the utmost. Yet he must have been well informed about the nature of the island. In the account of his proceedings¹⁾ he stated that he carefully examined Balambangan and all the adjacent beaches and straits, to learn whether another place might be preferred to that where the first settlement had been, but that he could find nothing better though this place »is of a sandy nature«.

In the course of the same expedition he surveyed also the north-east coast of Borneo and decided to erect an outpost in Marudu Bay for the purchase of pepper, indigo, tobacco and sugar.

He estimated the number of the settlers under British protection at Balambangan at 1600 and those of its dependencies at one million, a number at least ten times over-estimated!

Of much more interest than these vaguely founded allegations is his report concerning the relations with Sulu. It is evident that the Sulus must have had some ulterior motive for embracing the English cause so heartily. And so it was, for at that period Sulu was again on the verge of rebellion and anarchy, while a war was being carried on with the arch-enemy, the Sultan of Brunei. This war had broken out because the latter repeated old claims to the northern part of Borneo and to the circumjacent islands which as he pretended had been snatched away by the Sulus. As those were just the territories which had been ceded to the English they came just in time to prove the truth of the proverb: »When two are quarrelling, the third rejoices thereof«. Both litigious parties were willing to cede their claims to the English and to acknowledge their sovereignty. So Farquhar decided to take possession of all the islands and lands which had once been ceded on the basis of former grants.²⁾

Another reason why Sultan Alimud Din II. favoured a treaty with the English was the insecurity of his position on the throne.

He was the son of the usurper Bantila, and he had imitated his father in usurping the crown in 1778, after having poisoned his uncle Israel. Under his government hostilities with the Spaniards had

¹⁾ Bengal Secret and Polit. Cons. 18 July 1805. Farquhar's Report 16 Feb. 1804.

²⁾ Ditto, 18 July 1805. Farquhar's Report.

gradually increased, and the Moro raids, supported by him, assumed such dimensions that about 500 Spanish and native Christians were annually carried into captivity and sold as slaves at Macassar and in the interior of Borneo. Even strong merchant-ships were successfully attacked, so that Europeans and Americans dreaded the Straits of Borneo and the China Sea. A truce concluded with Spain in 1793 had not the least result in this respect, for undoubtedly the power of the usurper Alimud II. was solely founded on providing his subjects with spoils acquired by piratical raids. After 1795, when the English Navy was unrivalled and supreme in those quarters, the security of his position decreased, and the Moro enterprises became more difficult and dangerous. This insecurity may have driven him to stab Captain Pavin with his own hand, when he appeared at Sulu in 1800, and to distribute the cargo of the ship »Rubin« among his people. That crime also induced him to offer freely to Farquhar whatever was desired from him. On the other hand, it was a sharp weapon in the hands of his enemies, headed by Datu Mandellán, the son of the murdered Israel. In order to succeed in his aspirations to the throne, Mandellán offered to cede to the Company the Kingdom of Sulu with all its dependencies in full sovereignty, provided that the English would assist him.

Farquhar, well knowing the treacherous character of Sulu princes, wisely resolved to decline this grant and to »keep upon general terms of amity with all«. ¹⁾ He therefore recommended the establishment of a commercial factory in order gradually to divert the Sulu trade also to Borneo.

That Balambangan might indeed become the emporium of the Malayan trade, he willingly accepted the cession of Labuan which had already been granted in 1775 by the King of Brunei, and of Saranguine by the King of Mindanao, without however occupying them.

A new method, directly opposite to that till then followed, was to be adopted at the new market centre. Farquhar was convinced that the age of monopolies had passed. Balambangan was to prosper by perfect freedom of exchange and by exemption from all kind of duties. And here in a small island in the Extreme East the fundamental doctrine of the modern system of trade and colonial policy was pronounced and put into practice by R. J. Farquhar »that a great nation which imposes the fewest restraints upon and affords the most liberal encouragement to the exertions of the community, consults its own general benefit as much as the happiness and advantage of individuals«. ²⁾

¹⁾ Ibid.

²⁾ Ibid.

Having thus arranged and provided as far as possible for the new settlement, he appointed Major Cales Commissioner of Balambangan on 7 December 1803 and returned to Prince of Wales Island, where he was to fill the honourable rank of Lieutenant Governor.¹⁾

§ 2.

The Military Establishment at Balambangan.

The procedure to be observed in the civil and military administration was prescribed by the instructions Farquhar handed over to Cales in December 1803.²⁾

The present force was to be kept until fortifications and sufficient storehouses could be erected. A cutter was left there to protect the marine trade and the godowns.

The civil service was vested in a chief, a magistrate and superintendent for the Company's warehouses, a secretary, who at the same time had the charge of the treasury of the island, and a master attendant who also had to fulfil the office of pilot and harbour-master.

The Chief was empowered with the rights of a President. He could draw bills on Bengal and Madras and he was in direct correspondence with the chief secretary of Fort William.

Cales was strictly ordered to remain neutral in the conflict between Sulu and Borneo until one of these powers attacked the English; he was also entirely forbidden to meddle with the internal disputes of the Empire of Sulu. Towards the Malay and Chinese people a strictly friendly behaviour was to be observed. For this purpose a »captain Chinaman« and a »captain Malay« were to be appointed.

No trade was to be begun with the circumjacent States in the name of the Company until opulent merchants had settled at Balambangan. Owing to its being a free port a great influx of traders and stores was expected, and in order to provide sufficient shelter a large storehouse was to be erected on the hill near the beach, fortified by a stockade, in order to command the beach and the surrounding country.

An outpost establishment was to be made at Bengkoka in the Marudu Bay, from whence timber could be carried over and the heathen natives induced to come and settle at Balambangan.

¹⁾ Bengal Secret and Polit. Cons., 20 April 1804, Letter of Farquhar to Bengal 6 January 1804.

²⁾ Ditto, 18 July 1805 (N. 28).

In order to increase the population, natives were to be attracted, and convicts were to be sent from Bengal.¹⁾

One of the first proceedings of the Commissioner was to establish the small post in the mouth of the Bengkoka river in North Borneo, in order to provide provisions and pepper from thence and to encourage and protect the inhabitants there against the pirates. Captain Aldridge was sent thither with 40 sepoys in the »Henry«, which was armed with a few small guns. They were kindly received by the aborigines, although the Sulu chiefs in Banguay had forbidden them to supply the new establishment with material for building public works. These supplies were delivered, but the Borneans could not be persuaded to help in erecting a stockade until Farquhar sent the Chiefs of Banguay an energetic protest against their conduct, reminding them that according to the grant from and the treaty of friendship with the Sultan of Sulu they were to obey the orders of the Company's representative.²⁾ The result was that the Banguay sovereign protested against the suggestion as if he had prevented his people from assisting the sepoys, that he on the contrary exhorted them to do their best.³⁾ It was, however, too late, and the whole attempt had to be given up after a month owing to the unhealthy climate. More than half the people had constantly been ill because of the damp air, and as with the approaching monsoon still worse weather was foreseen the post was withdrawn early in March 1804 and never re-occupied in spite of the promise given to the Borneans by the chief officer.⁴⁾

Meanwhile the building of the storehouses at Balambangan made rapid progress. A powder-magazine and a battery were erected which commanded the anchorage in the bay, and larger fortifications were begun. Most of the garrison and of the settlers were employed in clearing the jungle and the land near the encampment, while the convicts were busy in unloading the ships. Large vessels brought stores from Malacca and Malay prows thronged in the harbour with supplies from the islands around.

It was strange that among these many ships there could not be seen a single Sulu vessel! It was as if they feared the English, or as

¹⁾ In September following 95 convicts had been deported thither. (Bengal Public Proc., 14 Feb. 1805. Letter from Balambangan 1 September 1804.)

²⁾ Bengal Secret & Polit. Cons., 4 April 1805 (N. 96).

³⁾ Ditto (N. 97).

⁴⁾ Ditto (N. 99).

if they plotted another treachery, although the Sultan was indefatigable in showing his sincere friendship.

More people came from the north-west side of Borneo. As the provisions of the garrison had been considerably diminished by the loss of three ships, and again when late in February 1804 the sepoy barracks were burned down, the settlement would soon have been in urgent need of necessaries had not the Borneans brought some.

It soon became evident that all the expectations based on the fertility of the soil had been chimerical. No seed whatever took root. Sand could not be more barren than the land of Balambangan. No vegetable, no grain, no fruit tree lived even two months. As early as 17 March 1804 Coles wrote to Bengal¹⁾ »Borneo supply has preserved us from starvations till now«. As at the same time the rice crop in Borneo failed, demands for provisions and necessaries were sent to Fort William and to Sulu.

The Sultan's promise that his people henceforth should carry their merchandise to Balambangan was as little kept as that to punish the Malay people who first had prevented the natives from helping the English at Bengkoka.

How readily Coles would have acceded to the repeated entreaties of the King of Brunei »to settle upon an island nearer him«. He would have had the choice between Labuan, Pulo Tiga, Pulo Gaya, or any of the islands in the neighbourhood. But the orders of the Governor General kept him back, to the sincere regret of the king.²⁾

The same orders were also strictly followed when on 27 September 1804 the civil and military establishment of Balambangan was put under the direct command of R. Farquhar, the new Lieutenant Governor of Prince of Wales Island.³⁾ Under that date the Lieutenant Governor at Penang was vested »with general powers of direction and control over all the British establishments in those quarters«.

Taking advantage of such an important position, Farquhar began to outline a scheme of reorganisation for the trade and commerce in the Eastern Archipelago⁴⁾ which, had it been put into practice, would have given the colonial map of to-day some quite different features.

He stated that in earlier times the English showed a dislike of having serious relations with the Malay princes and that the Govern-

¹⁾ Bengal Secret and Polit. Cons., 4 April 1805 (N. 99).

²⁾ Ditto (N. 102, 104, 105, 106).

³⁾ Ditto, 18 July 1805 (N. 41).

⁴⁾ Ditto, 6 September 1804 (N. 168).

ment had been extremely parsimonious in protecting the British subjects trading thither. It had allowed them to carry arms to defend themselves, but that was indeed all it had done for them. Many ships had been plundered and seized or sunk by pirates, without any news of them reaching St. James's Palace, and when their owners had asked for redress they had to procure it themselves. This system of free-traders, who had been perfectly independent of any European government at home or in India, gradually had to give way when the science of political economy created quite a new point of view in regarding the commercial intercourse between two nations, one of which is a manufacturing country while the other is rich in native produce.

Such a relation now existed between India and the Malay Archipelago. Piece goods from India were favourite objects in the eastern islands. The riches of Borneo and Sumatra, on the other hand, in Farquhar's opinion, at least equal to those of Brazil and South America, were much wanted in India.

In order to secure that wealth to Great Britain, the first steps had already been taken in obtaining influence over the chief channel to those quarters, the Strait of Malacca, by establishing a settlement at Penang, as the key to it. That the Dutch might not be able to rival with this post, Malacca was to be made useless by destroying all the fortifications there.

The numberless petty princes with their petty interests in the Archipelago were supposed to be the greatest obstacle. Therefore Farquhar proposed to conclude with them treaties of friendship and commerce and to punish severely the least breach of them. All the rulers near the Strait of Malacca and in the Far East were thus to be bound by one and the same kind of treaty, which had formerly been sketched out for an agreement with the Sultans of Sulu and Borneo Proper and to which the Governor General had given his unqualified approval as he had found it 'unexceptionable and extremely proper'.¹⁾

The Balambangan settlement was to be fortified and enlarged that it might be a strong centre between the Philippines, Borneo and Celebes. Another island on the southwest coast of Borneo was to serve the same purpose for Sumatra and South Borneo, while the island of Gebi was to be acquired to become the nucleus for the trade in the Spice Islands.

It is useless to dwell long on the prospect of such a far-reaching plan. 1804 and the years following were not favourable for its being

¹⁾ Bengal Secret and Polit. Cons., 18 July 1805 (N. 23 & 41).

put into execution. But that it was a project with possibilities was clearly seen five years later, when Sir Stamford Raffles, basing his policy principally on this scheme, began to play a leading part in the Eastern question.

He secured to the English the entrance to the Archipelago in adding Java to the former possessions. He secured the trade to Sumatra by entering into treaties with the rulers on the south-west coast of Borneo. He extended the British influence to the borders of the Moluccas by concluding new engagements with the Sultans of Sulu and Borneo Proper. And his is the great merit of having mitigated the pest that lay as a curse on those islands by attacking the roots of piracy when he, in 1813, dispatched an expedition to Sambas to level it to the ground, and when he concluded treaties with all the mighty princes in those quarters by which they agreed to co-operate in extirpating piracy.

* * *

The fate of the garrison at Balambangan was anything but enviable. Friendly prows came in great numbers, but instead of eatables they brought only mats, oils and birds-nests for trade. The soldiers and settlers were in constant danger of starvation whenever a ship with provisions from India did not arrive in time. By the end of 1804 the allowances of rice had to be curtailed. Letters asking for help were dispatched to China, Bengal and Penang, for the situation had become so desperate that Cales wrote »our prospects are dreary in the extreme.«¹⁾

Farquhar had estimated the monthly expenditure at 10,000 Spanish dollars, and accordingly he had left them in cash a sum for twelve months. But in fact the expenses amounted to:

Civil Department	Span. Dollars	4,000
Commercial Dept.		600
Marine Dept.		3,300
Military Dept.		10,000
Total Span. Dollars		17,900 ²⁾

The consequence was that money was as scarce as provisions.

Added to this, the garrison was constantly kept under arms by unfounded rumours as well as genuine dangers. Since March 1804 the island had been infested by a great number of piratical Lanuns,

¹⁾ Bengal Publ. Cons., 14 Feb. 1805, Cales's letter of 1 Sept. 1804.

²⁾ Ditto, N. 45.

who arrived there in hundreds of prows. They could not be driven off until, alarmed by a few gunshots, they retired to all the ports and beaches, where they succeeded in killing one of the settlers and in taking one prisoner.

One month later the Prime Minister of Sulu made his state visit at the head of the whole Navy of the Empire. His Excellency's behaviour, however, was wrapped in so profound an atmosphere of mystery that again the whole garrison was kept under arms to watch his steps, sword in hand. And when he left the Bay, after having carefully examined what was considered worth being shown to his scrutinising eyes, the cruiser »Fly« accompanied him far enough to prevent an unexpected attack.¹⁾

Fortunately for the settlement, where two hundred soldiers at least constantly lay sick owing to the bad climate, the news proved unauthentic that a French squadron consisting of twelve ships was to be sent from Batavia Road against Balambangan. Nevertheless, it alarmed the garrison, who, already weakened by hunger, suffered still more by never being relieved from duty.

Scarcely had they been informed that the Navy of Admiral Linnois, which had come from the Isle de France, had taken another course, than natives informed them that two Dutch men-of-war were lying at Samarang,²⁾ and once more everything had to be kept ready for an attack. Such alarming news could not but cause an increasing fear, that grew to a frenzied suspicion which looked on everyone as an enemy in disguise.

To this may be attributed the seizure of two Portuguese vessels which arrived at Balambangan from Macao. After having shown their passes and lists of cargo they were allowed to sell their goods. But suddenly they were seized by the garrison, owing to a wholly unfounded suspicion, and taken to Prince of Wales Island. A lengthy trial followed with the shipowner and the Portuguese Consul. As late as July 1807 the affair was settled by the English paying damages and redress and restoring the two vessels.³⁾

The trade did not by any means attain the importance which had been expected in the first few months. Goods had been brought to

¹⁾ Bengal Public Cons., 14 February 1805, N. 37.

²⁾ The point of Banguay nearest to Balambangan.

³⁾ Bengal Foreign Cons., 15 May 1806, N. 1, 2, 4, 5 A. Ditto, 4 Sept. 1806, N. 1, 4. Fact. Rec. Straits Settlements, N. 11 and 12, 27 Sept. 1805 — 15 July 1807.

the value of 84,000 Spanish dollars, of which sum cloths, carried from Amboyna, amounted to 73,000 dollars.¹⁾ As this cloth was of extremely bad quality, very little could be sold, so that the monthly transactions varied only between 1500 to 3000 dollars, and almost half of these stores had to be taken back to Prince of Wales Island, when late in November 1805 the whole garrison with all the settlers, stores and provisions was put on board seven ships to return to Penang and Bengal.

The same migration of a whole population took place as in October 1803. Eleven hundred and five men, after two years' hard experience and suffering turned their longing eyes westwards to places which by nature were more liberally endowed with fertility and homeliness. All the settlers, however, did not leave Balambangan. Some of the two hundred Chinese went to Borneo or to Canton, while others preferred to stay until they were encouraged to repair to Prince of Wales Island, which was to become an independent governorship.²⁾

What had happened to cause such a precipitate retreat?

Lord Wellesley had informed the Court of Directors early in 1803³⁾ of his plan to annul all the engagements entered into by Farquhar and the Sultans of Ternate and Batjan. With this resolution the Court were quite agreed; but on the other hand they entirely disagreed with the plan to re-occupy Balambangan, for when the Governor General's letter reached London hostilities with France and the Batavian Republic had recommenced. As it had been pointed out to them that the new settlement was to be a military station and consequently required fortifications and a respectable force for its defence, the Directors and the Board supposed Wellesley to have refrained from such a venture when he had heard of the outbreak of the new war in Europe. They therefore had not informed him of their opinion concerning his scheme of re-occupying Balambangan. As soon, however, as rumours reached them in the spring of 1804 that it had been put into execution, they sent a dispatch to Madras which strictly ordered⁴⁾ that if a settlement should have been formed at Balambangan »the same must be immediately withdrawn and not resumed without our special directions«. The reason for acting thus was the consideration that the troops and ships at that place could ill be spared in case the Dutch islands and settlements in the East should again be conquered in the course of the war.

¹⁾ Bengal Publ. Cons., 1, 13 February; 27 March, N. 9, 1806.

²⁾ Polit. Letters to Madras, 6 Feb. 1805.

³⁾ Letters from Bengal, 15 March 1803.

⁴⁾ Polit. Letters to Madras, 15 Aug. 1804.

Although this plan was not carried out, no further orders came respecting Balambangan, and the place was definitely left in November 1805, without the least resistance on the part of the Governor General. Only Farquhar protested against such an entire abandonment of the only position in the Far East. In his annual report of Prince of Wales Island¹⁾ of 18 September 1805 he reproached the Government »with long continued indifference towards complaints concerning piracy and the loss of ships and crews and«, he continued, »to the same source we may perhaps justly trace the cause of the British settlements heretofore formed by the Honourable Company, to the eastward of the Bay of Bengal, having ended almost invariably in a tragical manner«.

With this candid statement we are in entire agreement. Both Government and Directors at all times concentrated their attention on India Proper and neglected the farther East, either from incorrect information about it or, which is more probable, from clear-sighted policy.

It wanted a great and energetic man to take the lead in reopening the path to those distant quarters and to prove that besides the Dutch and Spaniards another power still could prosper there. This leader soon appeared in the person of the then Acting Secretary at Fort Cornwallis, Th. Stamford Raffles.

His attention, however, was turned first to the West Coast of Borneo, from whence cries for help reached him for protection against the inhuman cruelties and depredations of Anum, the pirate brother of the King of Sambas. Such an entreaty had already penetrated to Penang in December 1803 from the Sultan of Pontianak and Mompawa²⁾, and was repeated in 1810³⁾. It was taken up again by the King of Bandjermasin, who had already applied in 1797 to Prince of Wales Island to assist him in driving out the Dutch⁴⁾, in 1811⁵⁾, when General Daendel had deserted him in 1809, and Soekadana and Borneo Proper followed him.

The history of these events and their consequences, which lead directly up to the present state of the English relations with Borneo, belongs, however, to the modern era.

¹⁾ Bengal Publ. Cons., 26 Dec. 1815, N. 7.

²⁾ Bengal Secret & Polit. Cons., 18 July 1805, N. 58.

³⁾ Fact. Rec. Straits Settlements, N. 32, 16 May 1810.

⁴⁾ Fact. Rec. Java, N. 12 and 13.

⁵⁾ Ditto, 31 Jan. 1811.

Appendices.

Appendix I.

Instructions by Governor Pigot to Alexander Dalrymple.

Sir,

There are some circumstances of a private nature improper for public view which you are to pay a particular attention to in the course of your voyage.

Although the voyage is purposely intended for the prosecution of commerce to Sulu, you must consider yourself however as under general direction to be particular in your observation of every nature during the course of it.

In case you should find it expedient to touch at the Nicobars you will be as particular as possible in your observation on the harbour etc., and transmit them to me by the first safe conveyance.

You will if occasion offers conclude such a provisional treaty at Sulu with the Bughis princes or any others, taking always care previously to enquire whether they are under any and what engagements with other Europeans, and disclaiming every thing contrary to the treaties subsisting between us and them.

You will make it your particular study to engage the good inclinations of the Bughis and endeavour by their means to procure spice plants to be brought to Sulu, for which end you may agree to allow them on every plant that shall take root two dollars.

What steps to take towards obtaining satisfaction of the Guimbanos and in regard to the last contract with the sultan is left to your discretion as well as the distribution of the presents.

As there is a favourable prospect of a beneficial commerce to Sulu, an establishment may hereafter be found requisite. It is a point which requires serious consideration where to find the place more free from inconveniences and best situated; you will do well therefore to

examine as particularly as possible the north end of Borneo and the port of Banguey.

It is not necessary to explain to you the benefits which might attend the absolute cession of some spot to us. However it is recommended to you to give Mr. Kelsall all the informations you are able on this head that, in case any accident befalling you, he may be capable of prosecuting this important object which you are never to lose sight of as it appears to be the most effectual measure to prevent pretensions of other powers and to secure the advantages of the Sulu commerce to the Company.

In case you should have any correspondence with other Europeans regarding the Company's rights to the Sulu commerce, etc., it behoves you to act with the utmost circumspection that they may not be enabled to take advantage of any unguarded expression, or by discovering all the circumstances of our alliance to invalidate or call in question our pretensions by vamping up others of an earlier date.

The general rule for your conduct is to assure them that on your first arrival the Sulus declared themselves free from all engagements with other States and therefore to put them to the proof of their claims which may be turned to advantage hereafter.

You must also declare you have no authority for definite determinations but insist on our candid intentions and that we are determined to do nothing against our engagements. You are however to support by proper declaration and all prudent steps the Company's pretensions.

It is impossible to foresee all circumstances which may accrue and the steps which may be from them necessary or expedient in the course of your voyage so that particular instruction on every event is not possible to be given. It is therefore necessary to rest a discretional power with you of acting according to the exigency of circumstances in the manner which may be most for the public advantage.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant

Fort St. George, 9th June 1760.

George Pigot.

Appendix II.

Articles of friendship and commerce

agreed on and settled between the English and Sulus by Alexander Dalrymple Esq. on the part of the United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies and Sultan Mahomed Moio Din, son of Sultan Bodarud Din for himself and successors this 28th January 1761.

- 1st. The English shall have leave to choose a proper spot of ground for a factory and gardens and the Sultan engages to secure to them in the perpetual and unmolested possession.
- 2nd. The English in all disputes or litigious affairs between each other shall be adjudged by their own laws only. But all the affairs where the Sulus and English are jointly concerned shall be determined by the Sultan in conjunction with the English Chief.
- 3rd. The English shall have liberty to employ in their service any of the natives of Sulu — and such whilst they continue servants shall be subject to punishment from the English Chief, but not to be put to death without a council with the Sultan.
- 4th. If any Chinese or other tradesmen should choose to settle under the English jurisdiction they shall have leave to do so and be granted sufficient ground for their habitation and shall be considered as subjects only to the English.
- 5th. If the English are inclined to have plantations they shall have leave to purchase ground and cultivate on it what they please and be secured in the safe possession of their property.
- 6th. The English shall have a free trade with all parts of the Sultan's dominions and at Sulu without paying any custom or duty except any articles the Sultan may prohibit and such if brought shall not be landed though the ships shall not on any account be searched. If such goods be within the factory the Sultan shall apply to the Chief for their delivery, but without the factory they may be seized.
- 7th. No person belonging to the English shall be admitted to a commerce without the consent and approbation of the Chief and having previously assented to those articles and the Chief's jurisdiction.
- 8th. The English shall be assistant to the Sulus if attacked and the Sultan engages to protect the English from all enemies.

- 9th. The Sultan engages to admit no other Europeans but the English to any trade in his dominions.
- 10th. In case any vessel is lost in the Sultan's dominions and any part of the vessel or cargo is saved by the Sultan two-thirds shall be returned to the owners and one-third shall be the Sultan's for salvage.
- 11th. If any thieves are killed by the English it shall not be of any account.
- 12th. These articles to remain in force for ever if ratified by the Company, but if not approved, three years are allowed to settle others till when these shall continue in force.

Appendix III.

Articles of an alliance offensive and defensive¹⁾

mutually and reciprocally agreed to between His Majesty Fernando Allamudin, King of the Island of Sulu and the Dependencies thereof, and his son Prince Israel on the one part, and Dawsonne Drake Esq. President and Deputy Governor of the Philippine Islands and the rest of the Council thereof on behalf of the Honourable United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies on the other part.

Art. 1. The King of Sulu and his son, Prince Israel, for themselves and their successors for ever cede to the Honourable United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies such part or parts of the island of Sulu or of the territories thereon dependent as they may choose to erect forts, or factories upon and they will assist the English as much as is in their power.

Art. 2. The King of Sulu or his son, Prince Israel, shall have the government of the kingdom in the same absolute manner as their predecessors have had, the English shall not encroach on their prerogatives, the customs and religion of the country shall remain as at present nor shall the English intermeddle therein.

Art. 3. In case the English should erect forts or factories in the king's dominions and any of the subjects of Sulu should commit a murder on the person of an Englishman or of any of your servants or others belonging to any such forts or

¹⁾ 23 February 1763.

factories, the king shall cause such murderer to be punished with death, and in case the Malays or others, subjects of the said king should plunder or rob any person or persons belonging to the said forts or factories they shall be punished according to the nature of the crime and in default of the King's causing such punishment to be inflicted the English should be at liberty to right themselves.

- Art. 4. The King and Prince of Sulu fully confirm in every respect the Treaty of Commerce agreed to between Alexander Dalrymple Esq. on the part of the Honourable United English East India Company and Sultan Bantilan on the part of the Suluans.
- Art. 5. The King and Prince of Sulu for themselves and their successors grant to the English an exclusive free trade in all their dominions, they alone shall be exempted from all duties and their goods whether imported or the produce of the country shall pass to or from the forts and factories without examination or control.
- Art. 6. If the King of Sulu should be attacked the English shall assist him with such force as the situation of their affairs will admit. If the English in case of their continuance at Manila or at any other place should require the assistance of the Suluans the King shall grant them such a number of men as he can spare and the enemies of the one shall be considered as enemies of the other.

Appendix IV.

Alexander Dalrymple's Translation¹⁾ of Sultan Almu Din's Cession of Palawan, etc. 19. September 1763.

I Sultan Mahomed Almu Din who govern this kingdom of Sulu having been informed by Mr. Dalrymple that he had somewhat to communicate to me in presence of my counsellors in regard to the treaty made with the deceased Sultan Mahomed Moio Din about his having requested the island of Balambangan as a place for trade and for building and repairing ships and for making a fort for its defence and the said deceased Sultan having given the said island of Balambangan to the Company of England and promised others beside if the other

¹⁾ Original in Spanish.

should wish and ask for them and in virtue of the said promise Mr. Dalrymple begs the part of Palawan from the point of Camcepaan to the point of Booleclahuyan and on the Borneo side from the point of Sampangmangio to the point of Seepeelac to prevent all other European nations from passing or coming without the license of the said Company, which islands I give to the said Company on condition that those who are antiently my vassals and tributaries and while people who may come as ambassadors or for other purposes directly to this kingdom shall on no account be impeded, and this donation is in testimony of our true friendship to the British nation so that from this time for ever these lands do belong to the said Company of England; and in witness thereof I give this signed with my name and the names of my counsellors and sealed with my seal.

Appendix V.

Alexander Dalrymple's Translation¹⁾ of Sultan Almu Din's
Cession of Territories on North Borneo, etc.

29 June 1764.

I Sultan Mahomed Almu Din, son of Sultan Mahomed Badarod Din, who govern this island of Sulu and all its dominions do acknowledge to have sold to the English Company my right to the part of Borneo from Towsan Abai to Kimanis, the island of Palawan and all the other islands to the northward of Borneo; in return for the benefits I have received from the said Company, I give up to them all my pretensions and rights and those of my successors to these lands and islands and all that belong to them and ratify to the Company the full possession of Balambangan; the said Company may give the government of these lands and islands to any of my sons and relations if the said Company think proper. In testimony of the truth of these decrees and agreements I have hereunto put my name and affixed my seal to show all ages the rights of the said Company and I request all my friends and order and command all my vassals in the said lands and islands that they do conform to this declaration of my will and pleasure.

¹⁾ Original in Spanish.

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